DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 427 320 CS 216 580

AUTHOR	Hill, Bonnie
TITLE	Oregon Statewide Writing Assessment: Results, Analysis, and Sample Student Writings, 1993-1997. Grades 8, 10, 11.
INSTITUTION	Oregon State Dept. of Education, Office of Assessment and Evaluation, Salem.
PUB DATE	1998-02-00
NOTE	119p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Oregon Department of Education, 255 Capitol St., N.E., Salem, OR 97310-0203.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC05 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Evaluation Methods; Grade 10; Grade 11; Grade 8; Secondary Education; State Standards; Student Evaluation; Student Writing Models; *Writing Achievement; *Writing Evaluation; Writing Instruction
IDENTIFIERS	*Oregon Statewide Assessment Program

ABSTRACT

Noting that statewide writing assessment shows the achievements of Oregon students over the last decade, this booklet explains the results for the 1993-1997 assessments and provides papers illustrating the work that Oregon students in grades 8, 10, and 11 produce on the state test. The booklet's chapters are: (1) The History of Writing Assessment in Oregon; (2) The Analytic Models and Highlights of Assessment Results; (3) The Classroom Connection; and (4) Statewide Results and Sample Student Papers. Appendixes contain: a writing scoring guide; mode scoring guide; sample prompts, grades 8, 10, and 11; guides to revision, grades 8 and 10; student writer's report; requirements for collection of student work samples; conversion tables from 5- to 6-point scoring scale; inter-rater reliability 1996-1997; writing content panel members; and a 19-item annotated bibliography of material on writing assessment and instruction. (CR)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

CS

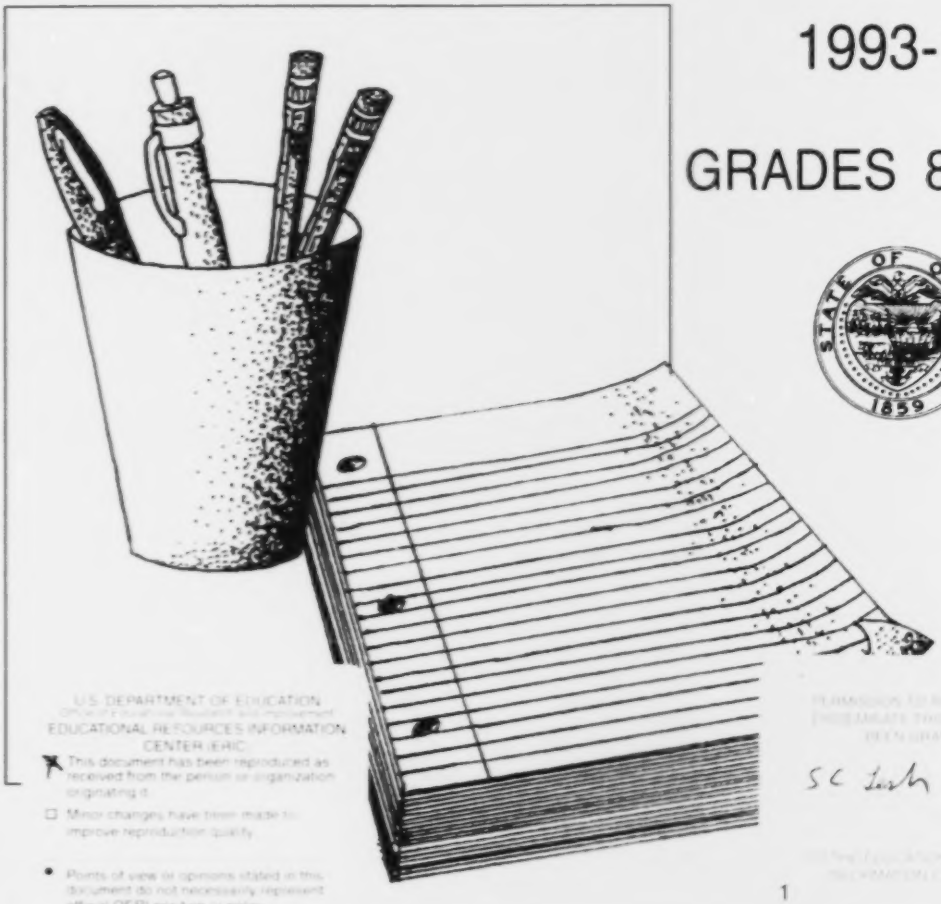
ED 427 320

Oregon STATEWIDE *Writing* ASSESSMENT

RESULTS, ANALYSIS, and SAMPLE STUDENT WRITINGS

1993-1997

GRADES 8, 10, 11



CS216580

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
SC Smith
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

Norma Paulus, State Superintendent of Public Instruction
Oregon Department of Education, Salem, Oregon

Oregon Statewide Writing Assessment

1993 to 1997

with Student Writings
Grades 8, 10 and 11

This report was prepared under the direction of

Barbara Wolfe
Assessment Coordinator
Office of Assessment and Evaluation

Oregon Department of Education
Public Service Building
255 Capitol Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301-0203

February 1998

It is the policy of the State Board of Education and a priority of the Oregon Department of Education that there will be no discrimination or harassment on the grounds of race, color, sex, marital status, religion, national origin, age or handicap in any educational programs, activities, or employment. Persons having questions about equal opportunity and nondiscrimination should contact the State Superintendent of Public Instruction at the Oregon Department of Education.

Cover Page Layout and Design Credit
Deon Foulger
Advanced Graphics Class
North Salem High School
Salem, Oregon

This document was written by
Bonnie Hill, Alsea School District

Many thanks to the Scoring Directors and Assistant Scoring Directors for the Oregon Statewide Writing Assessment who forwarded copies of student papers for use in this report.

This booklet is dedicated to Oregon's students and teachers, who work so hard and with such good spirit to ensure that all students can write effectively.

Produced by the
Office of Assessment and Evaluation
Oregon Department of Education
Salem, Oregon 97310-0203

Complimentary copies have been sent to all Oregon public schools and school districts. Additional copies are available for $8.00 each. To order, please send payment to the Publications Sales Clerk at the Oregon Department of Education, 255 Capitol St. NE, Salem, OR 97310-0203.

All or any part of this document may be photocopied for educational purposes and distributed for the cost of reproduction. Any such use for other than educational purposes requires the written permission of the Oregon Department of Education.

Foreword

Oregon's statewide writing assessment shows the achievements of Oregon students over the last decade. It also gives us a preview of how students are likely to do as they attempt to reach the new higher performance standards adopted as part of Oregon's school improvement efforts.

The writing assessment has been conducted yearly since 1991 (biennially from 1985 - 1991) and the pattern of results over the years is gratifying. This document will explain the results for the 1993 – 1997 assessments and provide papers illustrating the work that Oregon students produce on our state test. I am pleased to point out that average scores for students have shown improvement in almost every trait from year to year.

Oregon is a pioneer in developing an assessment that requires actual student writing and allows students sufficient testing time to produce and revise a fairly lengthy essay. The state is also a leader in providing information to students about their particular strengths and weaknesses on that essay by scoring the writing for six important areas, or traits, of writing. Oregon schools use the summary information about their students to plan curriculum and instruction improvements.

More and more Oregon teachers are making the state's Analytic Trait Writing Assessment part of their daily classroom activity. This report is useful as a summary of state level assessment results and as a staff development tool for teachers. It is a source of examples to share with students and parents in teaching writing or explaining the state test.

I commend Oregon students and teachers for their fine efforts and achievements in the critically important area of writing. And I encourage them to continue and strengthen those efforts so that all students will be able to achieve the writing standards established by the State Board of Education for the Certificate of Initial Mastery and the benchmarks leading to it.

Norma Paulus
Superintendent of Public Instruction

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: The History of Writing Assessment in Oregon 1

Chapter 2: The Analytic Models and Highlights of Assessment Results 5

- The Six-Trait Analytic Model Summary 5
- Mode Summary 7
- Trends in Writing Scores 1991-1997 9
- Highlights of Results of the Writing Assessment, 1993-1997 11

Chapter 3: The Classroom Connection 15

- The Value of the Scoring Guide 15
- Using the Scoring Guide as an Instructional Tool 15
- Integrating the Statewide Assessment into the Classroom (and Tips for Helping Students Do Their Best) 19

Chapter 4: Statewide Results and Sample Student Papers 21

Grades 10 and 11 22-52

- Ideas and Content *22*
- Organization *27*
- Voice *32*
- Word Choice *36*
- Sentence Fluency *41*
- Conventions *46*

Grade 8 53-75

- Ideas and Content *53*
- Organization *57*
- Voice *61*
- Word Choice *64*
- Sentence Fluency *67*
- Conventions *71*

Appendices:

A. Writing Scoring Guide: Analytical Traits (including Citing Sources) 78
B. Mode Scoring Guide 85
C. Sample Prompts, Grades 8, 10 and 11 91
D. Guides to Revision, Grades 8 and 10 94
E. Student Writer's Report 95
F. Requirements for Collection of Student Work Samples 96
G. Conversion Tables from Five to Six-point Scoring Scale 97
H. Inter-rater Reliability: 1996 and 1997 98
I. Writing Content Panel Members 99
J. Bibliography: Writing Assessment and Instruction 101

Chapter 1
The History of Writing Assessment in Oregon

The Background: From Indirect to Direct Assessment

Writing assessment has changed significantly during the past twenty years in Oregon and in other parts of the United States. As educators gained new insights about defining and teaching writing, they recognized the value of assessing student writing directly rather than indirectly. For decades, educators attempted to assess student writing through the use of standardized multiple choice tests. They recognized, however, the limited scope of information provided by those indirect assessments; multiple choice items could reveal students' understanding of some issues such as grammar and usage, but effective writing is characterized by qualities that multiple choice items simply cannot address. A richer, more meaningful approach emerged: students were provided with carefully designed, open-ended writing prompts and asked to write in response to those prompts; the writing that resulted was then assessed.

Oregon's First Direct Assessments: 1978-1982

In 1978, Oregon students were asked for the first time to actually produce a sample of original writing to be assessed by trained professionals beyond their school districts. A representative sample of students throughout the state in grades 4, 7, and 11 was assessed; the sample was based on school size, organizational structure, and geographic location. The student writing samples were assessed holistically, meaning that each paper received a single score based on its overall effectiveness. In 1982, another sample of students in grades 4, 7, and 11 participated in a holistic assessment.

Emergence of the Analytic Trait Model: Early 1980's

Teachers of writing during the early 1980's recognized the need for a model of assessment that would enable them to identify specific strengths and weaknesses in their students' writing. The Oregon Department of Education decided in 1985 to score student writing analytically; Oregon educators revised and refined a six-trait analytic scoring guide that had been initially developed by teachers from the Beaverton School District and Portland Public Schools.

In 1985, 1987, and 1989, the department conducted direct assessments of a random sample of several thousand eighth grade students. For the first time, their writing was scored analytically, which meant that each paper received six scores (one each for the traits of Ideas and Content, Organization, Voice, Word Choice, Sentence Fluency, and Conventions).

Classroom Implications: Sharing the Model with Teachers and Students

During the 1980's, as part of an effort that continues even now, methods and materials were developed in order to share the Analytic Model with teachers and students as both an assessment and an instructional tool in the classroom. Using the scoring guide, students could clearly understand the criteria on which their writing would be scored and could see the goals toward which they were working. They could evaluate their own writing, and peer feedback took on new meaning when students shared the same specific goals and the same vocabulary for

discussing each other's work. Used with the writing process, the scoring guide provided a powerful foundation for revision. Support for the analytic approach grew as teachers realized its value in instruction as well as in assessment. (See Chapter 3 for specific instructional uses of the approach in the classroom.)

Growth of the Assessment: 1989-1991

In 1989, the Oregon Legislature funded the Oregon Department of Education's plan to expand the assessment to include all Oregon students in grades 3, 5, 8, and 11. Each student paper, in addition to receiving scores in each of the six analytic traits, would also be scored for effectiveness of writing mode, or purpose. (In the mid-1980's, as Oregon educators developed the Essential Learning Skills, they called for students to demonstrate writing proficiency across the five modes of Narration, Description, Exposition, Persuasion, and Imaginative Writing.) In 1990, ODE conducted a pilot for the expanded assessment. Finally, in 1991, all Oregon students in grades 3, 5, 8, and 11 participated in the assessment. Each of 140,000 papers was read by two trained professionals and assigned a total of seven scores by each rater.

Budget Cutbacks: Smaller Scope of Assessment from 1992-1995

Because of budget constraints, only students in grades 3 and 8 participated in the 1992 Oregon Statewide Writing Assessment. The following year, in 1993, all Oregon students in grades 5 and 11 were assessed. The plan was to assess the two sets of grade levels in alternating years, which did, in fact, occur through 1995.

1991 Education Act Calls for High Writing Standards; State Board Adopts Specific Performance Standards for Certificate of Initial Mastery

With the passage of the Oregon Education Act for the 21st Century, the Oregon Legislature approved specific Performance Standards that students must meet in order to earn a Certificate of Initial Mastery (CIM). **Beginning in 1999, in order to qualify for a Certificate of Initial Mastery at grade 10, students must earn scores in the Statewide Writing Assessment of four or higher (on a six-point scale) in the four traits of Ideas and Content, Organization, Sentence Fluency, and Conventions.** Voice and Word Choice, although still scored as part of the assessment and still part of the Common Curriculum Goals, are not part of the Performance Standards. The modes of writing are still evident as part of the required Collection of Work Samples by which a student will demonstrate breadth of writing proficiency, but a mode score will not be assigned as part of the assessment. (See Appendix G for a complete list of the requirements for the Collection of Work Samples.) The decision to exclude scores for Voice, Word Choice, and Mode from the Performance Standards was based on a series of meetings of Focus Groups comprised of educators and community members; these groups felt it was important to narrow the Performance Standards to the most critical writing traits.

The requirements delineated in the Performance Standards changed the focus and shifted the primary purpose of the Oregon Statewide Writing Assessment. The main purpose in the past had been program evaluation at the school and district levels; the reporting of individual student performances was a secondary purpose. With the new legislation, however, reporting reliable individual student scores using an instrument that meets "technical adequacy standards" will be the primary purpose of the assessment.

Implications of the Education Act for the Assessment

Because of the specific Performance Standards outlined as part of the Oregon Education Act for the 21st Century, the stakes are higher for individual students in the writing assessment. The Oregon Department of Education began to prepare for the shift in focus as early as 1993. Changes have included:

- assessments of all Oregon 10th graders every year, beginning in 1996. (It is anticipated that most Oregon students will earn their Certificate Of Initial Mastery at the end of their 10th grade year. In the future, students will be offered several opportunities to take the assessment during the 10th grade year.)
- assessments of all 8th graders every year, beginning in 1996, so that students at that benchmark level will receive feedback about their progress toward the standards.
- assessments of 3rd and 5th graders every other year, so that students at those benchmark levels will receive feedback about their relative strengths and weaknesses in relation to the standards.
- increased choices of writing prompts for students. The assessment has moved from only one prompt on which a student was required to write during the early years, to a choice of two prompts within the same mode in 1992, to a choice of three prompts, each in a different mode, in 1996 and 1997. Every effort is made to ensure that students will have an opportunity to demonstrate proficient writing.
- a clarification in the directions for administering the assessment that students be allowed as much time as necessary to write their papers, even though three 45-minute class periods are suggested as a reasonable time frame.
- adoption of a six-point scoring scale in 1995, rather than the five-point scale used previously. The reason was to allow more differentiation among the middle scores and to align with other state scoring guides.
- refinements of the scoring guide based upon years of application to hundreds of thousands of papers in order to clarify both expectations for students and scoring criteria for raters during the assessment. Since students must achieve minimal scores of four to earn a Certificate Of Initial Mastery, the descriptors that differentiate a score of three from a score of four have received particularly close attention.
- a continued emphasis on inter-rater reliability, which has risen each year. (Inter-rater reliability refers to the occurrence of reliability between the two raters of a given paper, meaning that their scores, assigned in "blind" readings, are no more than one point apart.) In 1997, the state average inter-rater reliability rate among all sixteen scoring sites with over 1,000 raters was ## percent. The training of raters includes a qualifying or consensus process to help ensure reliability.

Additional Goal of Assessment: Put Scoring in Hands of Oregon Teachers

It has always been a goal of the assessment to put scoring in the hands of Oregon classroom teachers. The assessment has moved steadily in that direction, beginning with just one Oregon scoring site in Portland, with most of the papers scored by Data Recognition Systems in Minnesota. In 1993 there were three Oregon scoring sites, in 1994 there were nine, in 1995 there were thirteen, in 1996 there were sixteen, and in 1997 there were seventeen. Beginning in 1994, all papers were scored within the state, primarily by classroom teachers. Teachers who have participated say they have found the experience one of the best staff development activities of their careers, and almost all have found that their teaching of writing is profoundly affected when they return to their classrooms.

Current Assessment Procedures

As of 1996, Oregon students participating in the writing assessment were asked to produce a substantive piece of writing over the course of three days (i.e., three class periods) during a window of time in February. They were asked to write in response to one of three open-ended writing prompts, each designed to elicit a different mode of writing (i.e., narrative, expository, persuasive, or imaginative). Directions for the assessment encouraged students to use a writing process: a pre-write, a first draft, and a final draft. A Student Guide to Revision was included, and students were directed to use the guide as they read over their drafts (see Appendix C for the Guide to Revision). Students were instructed to write their final drafts on two pages provided in a test booklet. They were also asked to complete a survey when they finished their final drafts (See Chapter 2 for results of the survey).

The student writing samples were scored during March of 1997 at 17 sites around the state by trained teams of raters (over 1,000 in all), most of them full-time classroom teachers. Most teams at each site were comprised of about 50 percent experienced raters and 50 percent new raters. The goal is to keep expanding the numbers of raters so that they can go back to their classrooms with new understandings about student writing, the scoring guide, and the assessment itself.

Results were returned to school districts before the end of the academic year. Individual student results were included (see Appendix D for a sample Student Report) as well as tables of both classroom and district results. Teachers are encouraged to have mini-conferences with students to help interpret individual results and to help students place the results in the larger context of their relative strengths and weaknesses exhibited throughout the year. (See Chapter 3 for suggestions about how to integrate the assessment into classroom practices.)

Statewide Writing Assessment Only Part of a Student's Demonstration of Writing Proficiency

Oregon's legislation clearly requires students to perform well on the Statewide Writing Assessment in order to earn a Certificate Of Initial Mastery. However, it is important for students, teachers, and parents to remember that the assessment represents an "on-demand performance task" that is not meant to represent the full scope of a student's writing abilities. Rather, it is a "snapshot" of what a student can do with a particular prompt on a particular day. While it is important to be able to write "on-demand" with proficiency in the everyday world, people ordinarily have the opportunity to get feedback from others when writing something of importance, and to have access to the advantages of technology. Hence, the writing assessment is only part of Oregon's Assessment Model. Students also must make a collection of other evidence of their writing proficiency. Together, these pieces can demonstrate the breadth and depth of a student's abilities. (See Appendix G for a list of requirements for the Collection of Work Samples.)

Chapter 2
The Analytic Models and Highlights of Results of the Assessment, 1993-1997

Six-trait Analytic Model Summary

The Oregon Analytic Scoring Model is comprised of six traits. The complete scoring guide, with full descriptors at each of the six score points, is printed as Appendix A. Here, however, are brief descriptions of the six traits.

- **Ideas and Content**

The trait of Ideas and Content addresses the point of the writer's message, or main theme, along with all the supporting details that develop and enrich that theme. **Writing that meets the standard** is clear and focused with an easily identifiable purpose. Main ideas are communicated clearly and are supported by relevant details that provide evidence of an adequate exploration of the topic. When the topic or assignment calls for it, outside resources are used to provide accurate support (this would apply to classroom assignments only, not the statewide assessment, during which students do not have access to outside resources). **Writing that exceeds the standard** also provides evidence of making connections and sharing insights; writing at this level often includes the kinds of details readers would not ordinarily anticipate or predict. These writers notice the extraordinary or unusual that others overlook. In addition, the writing is controlled, details seem to have been carefully selected for audience and purpose, and, when appropriate, the use of resources provides strong, accurate, credible support.

- **Organization**

The trait of Organization gets at the structure of a piece of writing, including the thread of central meaning and the patterns that hold the piece together. Writers may choose from among many possible structures, such as a chronological sequence of events, comparison-contrast, deductive logic, point-by-point analysis, or others. The goal is an effective, graceful fit with the topic, however, rather than a formulaic, stilted organization that seems to have been superimposed upon the writing. **Writing that meets the standard** for this trait is coherent, with a developed beginning and body, as well as a sense of resolution or closure at the end. Transitions move the reader clearly from one point to the next. **Writing that exceeds the standard** begins in an interesting and meaningful way, creating in the reader a sense of expectation and anticipation. Transitions from one idea to the next are smooth and well-crafted, and a satisfying sense of resolution ends the piece.

- **Voice** (no minimum required score to earn a Certificate of Initial Mastery)

Voice reflects the distance between writers and their topics, and between writers and their audiences. A skilled writer understands when it is appropriate to establish a more objective or academic distance from a topic (e.g., when writing a report as a witness to an accident, or when writing a formal academic paper utilizing outside resources and appropriate citations). A skilled writer also recognizes when it is effective to establish a more personal rapport with an audience (e.g., when writing a personal narration or in certain kinds of fiction). Regardless, most writing can and should be made interesting, and a writer's interest in and commitment to a topic can be discerned even in non-fiction, for example. Strong writing is characterized by a sense that the topic has come to life; it may show liveliness, originality, conviction, sincerity, humor, or suspense.

- **Word Choice** (no minimum required score to earn a CIM)

Word Choice reflects the degree to which a writer has used specific words and phrases to convey the intended message in an interesting, precise, and natural way. Strong writers use a broad range of accurate, specific words that energize the writing; they may use figurative language or vocabulary that is striking, but it sounds natural and is not overdone. More often, a broad range of everyday words is used in a fresh and accurate way to create clear images, to provide cogent explanations, or to move the reader. If slang is used, it seems purposeful and is effective. Clichés and overused expressions are avoided.

- **Sentence Fluency**

The trait of Sentence Fluency addresses the rhythm and flow of language, the sound of word patterns, and the variety of sentence structures and beginnings that please the ear if read aloud. Fluent writing is characterized by an ease of movement, free of awkward word patterns that slow or confuse a reader. **Writing that meets the standard** has a natural sound; a reader can move easily through the piece, although it may lack a certain rhythm and grace. Readers like variety, and, at this level, some variety of sentence length, structures, and beginnings is evident. **Writing that exceeds the standard** is more fluid, with an easy rhythm; sentences seem to have been carefully crafted with a strong and interesting variety of lengths, structures, and beginnings. (Sentence Fluency is not a required part of the standard at the third grade benchmark.)

- **Conventions**

Conventions is the trait that encompasses the mechanics of writing: punctuation, spelling, paragraph breaks (indenting), capitalization, grammar and usage. Control of conventions is essential for clear and effective communication, and **writing that meets the standard** for this trait demonstrates that control: correct end-of-sentence punctuation, correct spelling of everyday words, sound paragraph breaks, correct capitalization. Errors at the standard level are minor and, while perhaps noticeable, do not impede readability, distort meaning, or confuse the reader. **Writing that exceeds the standard** demonstrates strong control over a wide range of conventions in a sufficiently long and complex piece; for example, more sophisticated types of punctuation are used, spelling even of difficult words is correct, and errors are both few and minor. (Neither handwriting nor neatness are considerations in assigning a score for conventions.)

The Six-point Scoring Scale

Student work produced for the Writing Assessment is scored using a six-point scale. Although the Scoring Guide is comprised of specific descriptors for each score point (see Appendix A), each score point can also be framed in a more global perspective.

Score of 6: Exemplary
Writing at this level is both exceptional and memorable. It is often characterized by distinctive and unusually sophisticated problem-solving approaches.

Score of 5: Strong
Writing at this level exceeds the standard. It is thorough, complex, and consistently portrays exceptional control of content and skills.

Score of 4: Proficient
Writing at this level meets the standard. It is strong, solid work that has many more strengths than weaknesses. The writing demonstrates mastery of skills and reflects considerable care and commitment.

Score of 3: Developing
Writing at this level shows basic, but inconsistent mastery and application of content and skills. It shows some strengths but tends to have more weaknesses overall.

Score of 2: Emerging
Writing at this level is often superficial, fragmented, or incomplete. It may show a partial mastery of content and skills, but it needs considerable development before reflecting the proficient level of performance.

Score of 1: Beginning
Writing at this level is minimal. It typically portrays a lack of understanding and use of appropriate skills and strategies. Writing at this level may contain major errors.

Mode Summary

Until 1996, student papers for the Oregon Statewide Writing Assessment were assigned a score for mode in addition to scores for each of the six analytic traits. ("Mode" indicates the primary purpose for the piece of writing: to describe something, to recount a personal experience, to explain something, to persuade, or to write fiction.) When the major purpose for the writing assessment was program evaluation, the main intent of the mode scores was for schools and districts to look for patterns in student results to help ensure that students across the state were being afforded opportunities to write in different modes and were receiving direct instruction in different modes. For example, if tenth graders in a given school consistently scored low in imaginative writing, teachers might ask themselves if students were given enough opportunities to write short fiction; if third graders consistently scored low in expository writing, a school might examine its curriculum and classroom practices to see if there were adequate instruction in exposition.

As the primary purpose of the assessment is shifting to individual student results and demonstration of writing proficiency, however, the mode score has been eliminated. It is still essential that students be able to write in a variety of modes, but this breadth in their skills will be reflected in their Collections of Evidence, usually in the form of a portfolio, which will at the CIM level include at least five pieces of writing generated at the classroom level in addition to the Writing Assessment. The State Board of Education approved specific Performance Standards that require certain modes to appear in student Collections of Evidence.

Students will still need direct instruction in the modes, then, and the Mode Scoring Guide has been recently refined and revised. The complete guide is included as Appendix B; what follows here is a brief summary of each mode. (One additional change has been that the mode of Description was eliminated; descriptive writing seems to occur most frequently in the context of other modes, rather than in isolation.)

The writing prompts for the assessment itself will still be constructed to elicit writing in a particular mode, even though a mode score will not be assigned. Students will have a choice of three prompts, each in a different mode. (See Appendix C for sample prompts in each mode for grades 8, 10 and 11.)

- **Narrative**

Narrative writing recounts a personal experience based on something that really happened. The paper has a clear, identifiable storyline that is easy to recognize, follow, and paraphrase. All details work together in an integrated way to create a complete story with a beginning, a middle, and an end. There is a focus with a controlling idea, central impression, sense of change, or something learned or gained by the writer. Events move along, staying within that focus, with some sort of a narrative structure, often chronological. (For purposes of assessment, Narrative is distinguished from Imaginative writing in that Narrative is based on real-life experiences, whereas Imaginative is meant to be fiction.)

- **Expository**

Expository writing provides information, explains, clarifies, or defines. The writing informs or amplifies the reader's understanding through a carefully crafted presentation of key points, explanations, and supportive detail. The writing contains clear ideas that are focused and fully explained. When appropriate, the writer has utilized a variety of credible resources to gather accurate, relevant information that provides a strong base of support in the form of facts, examples, illustrations, incidents, or explanations. Strong writers show a concern for audience and purpose by carefully selecting words, elaborative detail, and stylistic devices; they also recognize that greater stylistic distance may be required in a formal, academic paper than in an informal, personal paper, but that expository writing can be lively, engaging, and indicative of the writer's commitment to the topic.

- **Persuasive**

Persuasive writing attempts to convince the reader to agree with a particular point of view and/or to persuade the reader to take specific action. The topic must be debatable: there are clearly reasons for more than one point of view. Persuasive writing differs from expository in that it does more than explain; the writer also takes a stand and endeavors to persuade the reader to take that same stand. Strong persuasive writers support their clearly stated position with reasoned arguments supported by credible evidence, facts, anecdotes, and statistics; if used, emotional appeals are well-balanced by these and other objective forms of documentation. Strong writers also address other points of view, but acknowledge or counter points without seeming to shift positions. When a specific audience has been identified, the nature of the arguments and the style of presentation are designed to appeal to that audience.

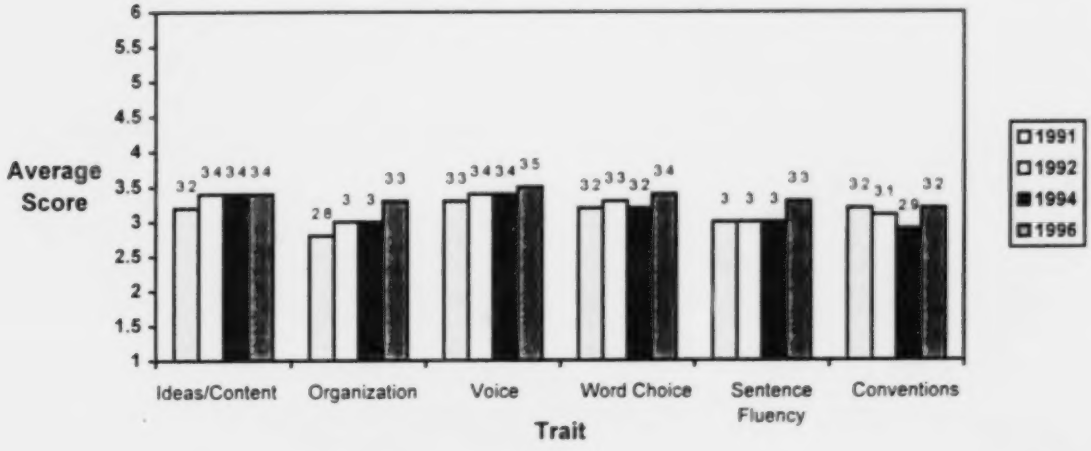
- **Imaginative**

Imaginative writing invents a situation or story based upon the writer's imagination. The writer might create a scene, situation, and character(s), might predict what could happen under hypothetical circumstances, or might solve a hypothetical problem using a creative approach. Imaginative writing often, but not always, takes the form of a short story. In some of the most effective imaginative writing, the writer uses his or her knowledge of the world, people or situations to make the situation or story seem realistic, but, as in all fictional writing, the writer is not bound by the constraints of reality. Imaginative writing may contain elements of fantasy; the key question, however, is not how fantastic it is, but how inventive it is. Strong imaginative writing may contain, as appropriate, insight, drama, humor, the unusual, the unexpected, or suspense. Reader reactions often range from a sense of being challenged or intrigued to a sense of feeling delighted or amused.

Trends in Writing Scores 1991-1997

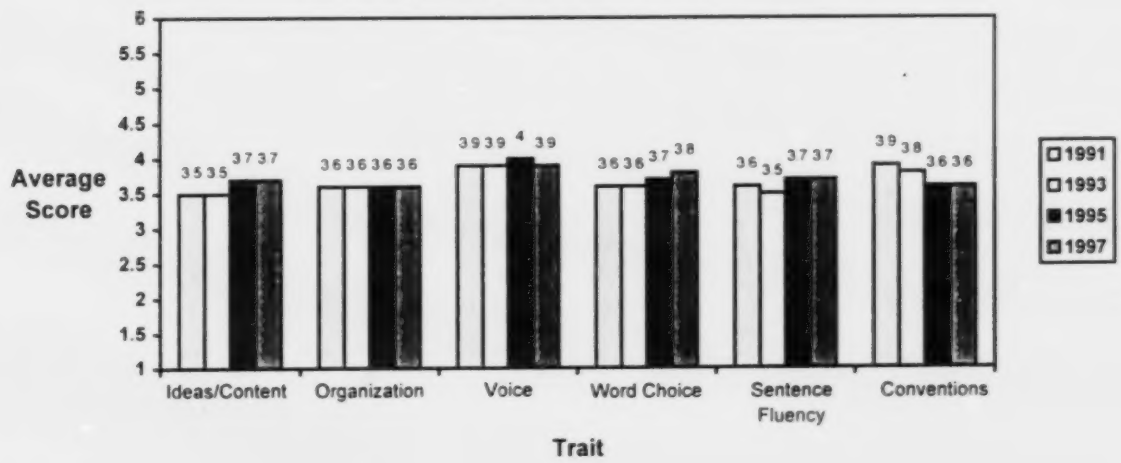
Third grade students' writing has improved in comparison to 1991 in all traits except Conventions, where it remains the same. As the chart below shows, average scores for organization increased steadily, moving from 2.8 in 1991 to 3.3 in 1996. Grade 3 was not assessed in writing in 1997.

Grade 3 Equated Writing Means (6 point scale)



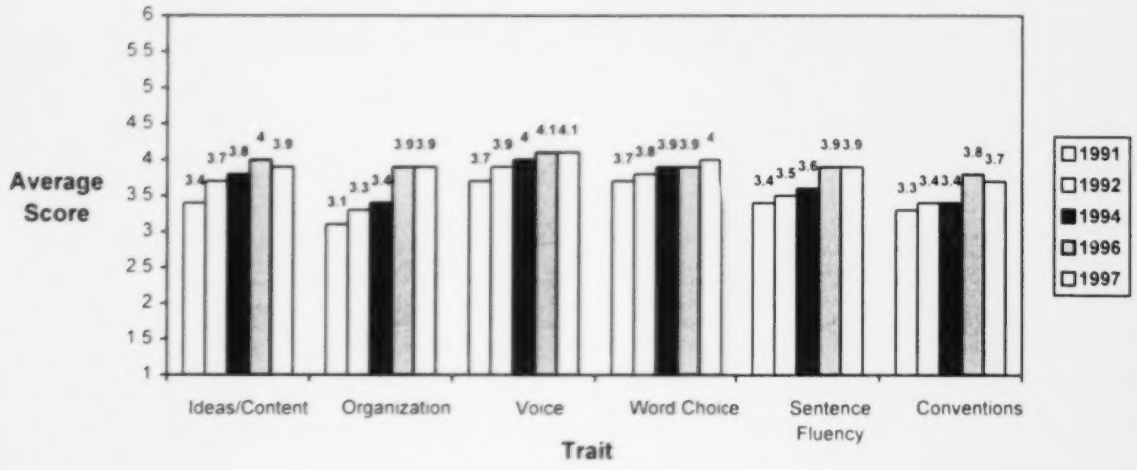
At grade 5, writing performance improved in the traits of Ideas/Content, Voice, Word Choice, and Sentence Fluency. Average scores remained the same for Organization, and declined for Conventions.

Grade 5 Equated Writing Means (6 point scale)



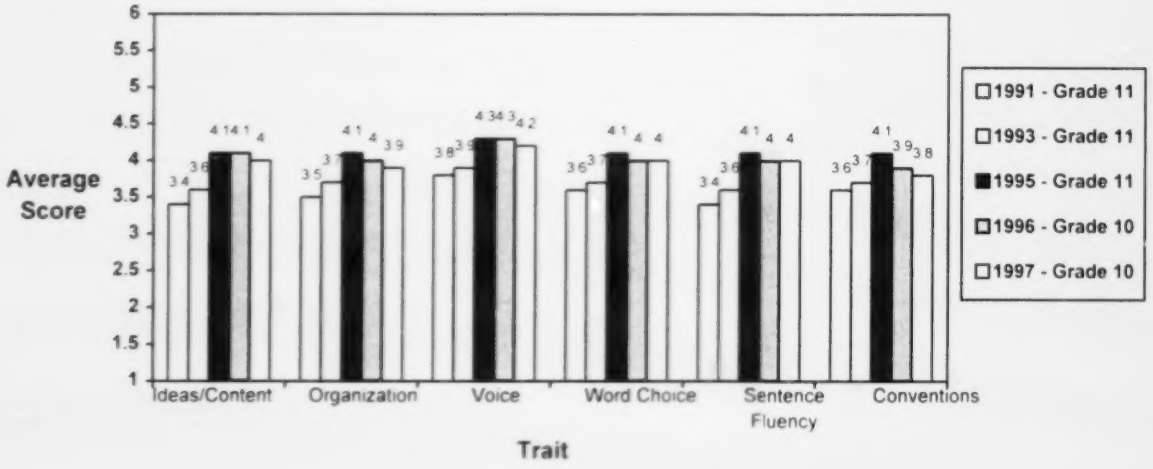
Eighth grade students' writing has improved in all traits since 1991, with greatest gains seen for Ideas/Content and Organization. Average scores in Ideas/Content and Conventions declined slightly from 1996 to 1997. All-time highs were set or equaled in 1997 in the traits of Organization, Voice, Word Choice and Sentence Fluency.

Grade 8 Equated Writing Means (6 point scale)



Students at the high school level have improved their writing in all traits since 1991. In 1996 and 1997 the writing assessment took place at grade 10 instead of grade 11. Performance of tenth graders in those two years was only slightly lower than that of 1995's eleventh graders.

Grades 10 and 11 Equated Writing Means (6 point scale)



Highlights of the Results of the Writing Assessment, 1993-1997

1993: Grades 5 and 11 (scored on a five-point scale)

- As in 1991 and 1992, the assessment provided evidence that Oregon students are strong writers. The performance of 11th grade students, in particular, improved noticeably from the last time they had been assessed in 1991.
- The percentage of students in **Grade 11** who scored a 4 or a 5 increased seven to nine percentage points in all six traits.
- Students in **Grade 11** also improved dramatically (fifteen percentage points or more) in the modes of Descriptive, Narrative, and Imaginative writing while maintaining strong performances in the Expository and Persuasive modes.
- The percentage of students in **Grade 5** who scored a 3 or higher was about the same as the last time they were assessed in 1991, but fewer students scored a 4 or 5 in the traits of Word Choice, Sentence Fluency and Conventions.
- Students in **Grade 5** improved in the modes of Descriptive and Imaginative writing.
- Scores in the trait of Organization for students in both **Grades 5 and 11** continued to be relatively low. Student performance in this trait continued to be lower than in all other traits. A similar pattern existed in previous assessments among students in Grades 3 and 8.
- When asked on a survey to respond to the question, "How much do you usually like to write?" about 73 percent of students in **Grade 5** responded "very much" or "somewhat" while about 69 percent of students in **Grade 11** did.

1994: Grades 3 and 8 (scored on a five-point scale)

- In general, students maintained or extended gains in writing observed since 1991 and 1992. (At both grade levels, the 1992 scores had improved in nearly all traits and modes over the 1991 scores.)
- The average trait scores for students in **Grade 3** were unchanged from 1992, with the exception of the score for Conventions, which declined from 3.1 to 2.9.
- Mode scores for students in **Grade 3** improved in four out of the five modes (Descriptive, Expository, Persuasive, and Imaginative), as indicated by the percent of students scoring at the 4 and 5 levels.
- Students in **Grade 8** improved their average scores in all six traits compared to 1992 levels.
- Mode scores for students in **Grade 8** improved in Descriptive, Expository, Narrative, and Persuasive, but were slightly lower in the Imaginative mode.

1995: Grades 5 and 11 (scored on a six-point scale)

- Students in both **Grades 5 and 11** showed improvement in nearly all traits and modes.
- In all six traits, at least three-fourths of the scores for students in **Grade 11** were in the upper ranges of 4, 5, or 6.
- In Ideas and Content, 35 percent of all students in **Grade 11** scored a 5 or a 6.
- In Conventions, students in **Grade 11** demonstrated a significant gain of .5 over the average score in 1993.
- Nearly 60 percent of students in **Grade 5** scored 4 or higher across all six traits.
- In Ideas and Content, 20 percent of students in **Grade 5** scored a 5 or a 6.

1996: Grades 3, 8, and 10 (scored on a six-point scale)

- Students in **Grade 3**, who were last assessed in 1994, improved significantly in the traits of Organization (progressing from an average score of 3.0 in 1994 to 3.3 in 1996); Sentence Fluency (from 3.0 to 3.3); and Conventions (from 2.9 to 3.2).
- **Third graders** held steady in Ideas and Content (3.4), improved somewhat in Voice (3.4 to 3.5), and in Word Choice (3.2 to 3.4).
- The state standard for **Grade 3** will be a score of 3.0 in the traits of Ideas and Content, Organization, Sentence Fluency, and Conventions. Third graders in 1996 achieved an average score of at least 3.2 in each of those traits (and in the other two of Voice and Word Choice as well).
- Students in **Grade 8** were also last assessed in 1994. In 1996 they achieved significantly higher average scores in the traits of Organization (from 3.4 in 1994 to 3.9 in 1996); Sentence Fluency (from 3.6 to 3.9); and Conventions (3.4 to 3.8).
- Students in **Grade 8** improved also in Ideas and Content (3.8 to 4.0); Voice (4.0 to 4.1); and scored the same in Word Choice (3.9).
- The state standard for **Grade 8** will be a score of 4.0 in the traits of Ideas and Content, Organization, Sentence Fluency, and Conventions. As a group, eighth graders scored an average of 4.0 in the trait of Ideas and Content. Average scores for the other three critical traits fell below the standard that will be expected in 1999 (3.9 in Organization, 3.9 in Sentence Fluency, and 3.8 in Conventions). However, eighth graders made significant improvement since 1994 in each of the critical four traits.
- 1996 was the first year **10th graders** were assessed. As of 1999, they also will be expected to score at least a 4.0 in the traits of Ideas and Content, Organization, Sentence Fluency, and Conventions to earn a Certificate of Initial Mastery. The average scores of students in Grade 10 were at or above the standard in all traits except Conventions, in which they scored a 3.9.
- Compared to 11th graders assessed in 1995, the **10th graders** of 1996 compared favorably. Their average scores were exactly the same for Ideas and Content (4.1) and Voice (4.3). In

the traits of Organization, Word Choice and Sentence Fluency, they scored one-tenth of a point below the 11th graders, and in Conventions two-tenths of a point below.

- Percentages of all **10th graders** who scored 4's, 5's and 6's for each trait were as follows: 77 percent in Ideas and Content; 75 percent in Organization; 84 percent in Voice; 77 percent in Word Choice; 76 percent in Sentence Fluency; and 67 percent in Conventions.

1997: Grades 5, 8, and 10 (scored on a six-point scale)

- Students in **Grade 5** improved slightly in Word Choice, declined slightly in Voice and equaled previous high statewide average scores for the writing traits of Ideas/Content, Organization and Sentence Fluency. The use of Writing Conventions remained the same as when fifth graders were last tested in 1995.

- Students in **Grade 8** also showed improvement in Word Choice, while maintaining previous highs in the writing traits of Organization, Voice and Sentence Fluency. Scores in Ideas and Content and Conventions each declined one-tenth of a point.

- Students in **Grade 10** maintained previous highs in the traits of Sentence Fluency and Word Choice. Overall averages in Ideas and Content and Voice remained at or above the standard of 4. Scores in Organization and Conventions each declined one-tenth of a point from 1996.

- Percentages of all **10th graders** who scored 4's, 5's and 6's for each trait were as follows: 75 percent in Ideas and Content; 72 percent in Organization; 85 percent in Voice; 79 percent in Word Choice; 75 percent in Sentence Fluency; and 66 percent in Conventions.

Comparison of the **Student Survey** results from **1996** and **1997 (Grade 10)**:

	1996	1997
What kind of prewriting did you do for this paper?		
• Listing words or outlining	21%	
• Clustering or webbing	17%	
• Freewriting / quickwrite	63%	
• Talking with a friend or family member outside of class	7%	
• Something different from the things listed	21%	
Which of these things did you do in revising your rough draft?		
• I took some things out or put more information in.	64%	
• I moved things around.	35%	
• I found a better way to say something.	68%	
• I edited for spelling, punctuation, or other errors.	64%	
• I recopied my paper just the way it was without making any changes.	4%	
How much do you usually like to write?		
• Very much	20%	20%
• Somewhat	50%	49%
• Not much	22%	23%
• Not at all	8%	8%
How much did you like writing on this topic?		
• Very much	19%	19%
• Somewhat	48%	47%
• Not much	22%	23%
• Not at all	11%	12%

	1996	1997
In which of the following modes of writing have you written this year?		
• Expository - Yes	54%	56%
No	12%	12%
Not sure	34%	32%
• Imaginative - Yes	75%	75%
No	15%	15%
Not sure	10%	10%
• Narrative - Yes	70%	70%
No	14%	14%
Not sure	16%	16%
• Persuasive - Yes	60%	63%
No	23%	21%
Not sure	17%	16%
Do you write papers longer than one page in classes other than English or language arts?		
• Yes	46%	44%
• Occasionally	45%	47%
• No	9%	9%
In your English or language arts class, how often are your papers assessed or graded using the analytic traits (ideas and content, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions)?		
• Most of the time	51%	54%
• Sometimes	33%	34%
• Never	4%	4%
• I do not understand what you mean by analytic traits.	11%	9%
About how much time did you use to write your paper?		
• 60 minutes or less		23%
• 70 to 100 minutes		35%
• 100 to 150 minutes		32%
• 160 minutes or more		10%
The amount of time allowed for the writing test was		
More than I needed		30%
About right		59%
Not enough		11%

Chapter 3
The Classroom Connection

The Value of the Scoring Guide in the Classroom

Many teachers throughout Oregon have realized since the early 1980's that the analytic approach to writing assessment has value for them and their students in both assessment and instruction. The scoring guide has been revised and refined as it has been applied to hundreds of thousands of student papers over the past fifteen years. It has proven to be an effective instructional tool because it provides

- common, specific understandings about the elements of good writing;
- the same vocabulary as students and teachers discuss writing across grade levels, classrooms, schools, and districts (eventually, as more teachers and students use the guide, the common approach and vocabulary should provide continuity for the approximately one-third of Oregon's student population that is highly mobile);
- a vehicle for meaningful self-evaluation and self-reflection;
- a focus for meaningful peer feedback among students;
- specific feedback to students about their relative strengths and weaknesses;
- true integration of assessment and instruction, since the same method is used for both;
- a vehicle for communicating with parents, administrators, and the public at large about specific goals and standards for student writing.

Using the Scoring Guide as an Instructional Tool

As teachers have incorporated the scoring guide into their instruction and assessment, they have developed materials and methods to help students apply and eventually internalize the guide. Some suggested practices:

- Either obtain copies of the scoring guides in student language at the appropriate grade level from the Oregon Department of Education, or have students themselves "translate" the scoring guide into student-friendly language.

- After students have worked with the complete guide, have them use condensed versions of the scoring guides, perhaps using only the full descriptions of score point numbers 3, 4, and 5 in order to make the document more manageable on a day-to-day basis.

- Copy condensed versions of the guide to fit on both sides of one page; use brightly colored paper, laminate, three-hole punch, and distribute to students to keep in their notebooks throughout the year. Number them and collect them at the end of the year to re-use the following year.

- Create colorful classroom posters for each trait with a few key words, phrases, and pictures or graphics.

- Obtain samples of actual student writing to share with students. Collect your own, or use samples in collections such as those in this booklet or in others published by the

Oregon Department of Education. Teach students to score these samples of writing using the scoring guide. Begin with group scores and discussion, perhaps with read-alouds of sample writing, or with overhead transparencies. Contrast strong and weak examples as you introduce each trait, discussing differences. Make sure students tie their scores and comments directly to the descriptors in the scoring guide itself. Create an atmosphere that establishes the value of accurate, honest feedback if students are to become stronger writers.

- After scoring samples of student writing in order to learn how to interpret and apply the scoring guide, have students apply the scoring guide in peer review situations involving their own original writing. Scoring slips with room for comments can be provided, along with five to ten minutes of discussion time. Accountability can be built in if students sign their slips and comments, attach them to the draft, and get a few points of credit. Again, emphasize the importance of basing the scores and comments directly on language from the guide. Peer review seems most useful at some point in the writing process when students still have an opportunity for revision.

- Some teachers, especially at the elementary level, will score only one or two traits on a given assignment so that students will focus more attentively on that particular trait. For example, if a teacher has just presented a series of mini-lessons on Conventions, then perhaps just that trait will be scored on the next major writing assignment.

- Feel free to adapt the scoring guide to fit specific requirements for certain assignments. If, for example, students have been asked to provide graphics for a certain assignment, add that to the list of traits to be scored. Be sure to inform students of specific scoring criteria before they begin the assignment.

- Over time, it is likely that patterns of student performance in the traits will emerge in a given class. You may notice that the class as a whole tends to have problems with Organization, or perhaps just with writing inviting introductions and developed conclusions. (Students can be asked to keep a form in their portfolios that tracks their individual scores on a series of papers over time so that they–and you–can perceive patterns of scores. Such individual papers could be analyzed for whole-class patterns as well.) Once the weaknesses have been identified, mini-lessons can be designed to address them.

- Notice that the latest revision of the scoring guide (Appendix A) includes a guide for Citing Sources on the final page. (It is required as part of the Collection of Work Samples that students in the 8th and 10th grades include a paper in which they have utilized outside resources and cited them appropriately.) This guide for Citing Sources should help assess those critical skills.

- Of course, not all student work needs to be scored using the scoring guide. Most teachers who use it do so only for significant, lengthier pieces on which students will spend some time; they are pieces that students will take through most stages of a writing process. Short writing assignments, journal entries, reader responses to literature, etc., are not usually scored using the scoring guide.

- Since our education system has traditionally used a grading system of letter grades, individual classroom teachers who use the scoring guide to assess student writing need to decide how to mesh the two. There are basically two approaches:

- The first approach is to find a mathematical correlation between the scoring guide and a letter grade that satisfies your concept of a fit. Some teachers have utilized the following method: add the six scores assigned for a given paper and average them to obtain a single score. Then, a 6 would earn an A+ because it is exemplary, exceptional work (even though it may not be perfect); a 5 would earn an A or a B because it exceeds the standard (an A paper would contain some insight and would score high in the four most critical traits); a 4 would earn a low B or high C because it meets the standard as a solid paper (again, the solidity of the four critical traits might be the deciding factor); a 3 would earn a D because it falls short of the standard; and 1's and 2's would earn an F. Averages with a decimal (which would include most papers) would fall somewhere in between. Adapting scores to the grading system with a direct mathematical correlation is difficult, and teachers are still experimenting to find a system that meets everyone's needs and expectations.

- The second approach is to score papers for all six traits and assign a holistic letter grade that takes all six traits into consideration; explain to students that this is different from a holistic letter grade of several decades ago because all six scoring criteria form the basis for the holistic score, rather than an overall impression about the effectiveness of the piece (usually based primarily upon conventions). Clearly, papers with mostly 5's and 6's will earn an A, 4's and 5's a B, and so forth. Teachers who have used this approach have been satisfied with it and have been able to gain the confidence of students and parents, but some still search for a more straightforward mathematical correlation.

Writing Process Encouraged in Assessment, Still Part of Common Curriculum Goals / Content Standards

As teachers across the state reviewed drafts of **Performance Standards** for the CIM and CAM system, many voiced their deeply felt concern that the writing process did not appear in the standards, since most contemporary teachers of writing understand from experience the value of process. Process has not disappeared from the state curriculum; it appears as part of the **Common Curriculum Goals**. (Performance Standards differ from Content Standards in that they specify what students **must demonstrate in order to earn a Certificate of Initial and Advanced Mastery**.) If a student has produced a collection of writing samples that meets the standards in every way, yet has not clearly demonstrated the process used, should he or she be denied a certificate? At that level, it is the products of the process being offered as evidence of achievement.

Nevertheless, the state curriculum continues to recognize the value of instructing students in a variety of approaches and strategies related to process. Writing instructors should teach process, facilitate it by providing time for it, give feedback to students about their processes, and perhaps award points toward a grade for using process.

The Statewide Writing Assessment itself encourages process by its very structure; directions for students include suggestions and time allotments for a pre-write, a first draft, a Student Guide to Revision at each grade level (see Appendix C), and a final draft. Survey questions at the end of the assessment ask students to identify what they did during various stages of the writing process as they participated in the assessment. (The surveys in recent years indicate that most Oregon students do, in fact, utilize a writing process, and that they are familiar with terminology related

to process. Perhaps most rewarding to teachers are the revision strategies practiced by students during the assessment; see Chapter 2 for detailed results of the Student Survey.)

Classroom teachers who facilitate process have sometimes questioned the lack of opportunity during the writing assessment for feedback from others. Under normal circumstances in the everyday world, there is opportunity for feedback from people such as colleagues, supervisors, and family members. However, in the working world and in everyday personal business matters, such opportunities do not always exist, and students need to learn how to be self-sufficient writers who can write effectively "on-demand." Their Collections of Work Samples provide ample opportunity for peer, teacher, and parental response; the writing assessment is the one on-demand task to demonstrate independence as a writer.

The scoring guide itself can be used with a writing process at several stages. Following is a sample scenario from a classroom that utilizes both process and the scoring guide:

- Brainstorming of topic: whole-class discussion, small-group discussions, and/or one-on one conversations as students choose and narrow topics–perhaps everyone is to write a persuasive piece, for example, after a few mini-lessons on effective persuasion which include models by both professionals and students
- Individual pre-writing activities: word clustering, mapping, webbing, formal or informal outlining (Perhaps 5 or 10 points possible)
- First draft: purpose is to get thoughts to flow; although conventions are eventually of critical importance, revising, editing, and proofreading come later in the process–most writers find it disruptive to their thought process to check accuracy of conventions at this point (Perhaps 25 points possible)
- Peer response: using the scoring guide, students give each other specific feedback on each of the six traits. They might actually assign scores to papers, based on the descriptors in the scoring guide; score sheets might be signed. One-on-one conversations might follow to provide explanatory verbal feedback about the paper. (Perhaps 10 points possible for the person providing the response) This helps make peer response more meaningful, rather than a generic, "I liked your paper..."
- Second draft: using feedback from peers and possibly a teacher as well (who might be circulating around the room skimming papers and giving verbal feedback during the peer response time allotment), students now revise the first draft, paying close attention to each trait, including careful and thoughtful use of conventions. When they hand this draft in, they are saying, "Given everything I know about writing, and given some feedback from peers, this is the very best I can do." (75 or 100 points possible) Notice that the points are loaded into this stage of the process in many classrooms. If students are highly motivated, it makes sense to load points into the final revision, but many students, unfortunately, will wait until they get specific feedback from teachers, including notation of conventional errors, before they get serious about revision. Making this stage worth the most points helps develop independence and self-sufficiency.
- Teacher scores second draft using scoring guide; written comments are included that point out specific characteristics of the paper (e.g., "Conclusion could be more developed.")
- Revision: using feedback from the teacher, students revise their second drafts, paying close attention to each trait and all written comments. Students are expected to correct all errors in conventions pointed out, and to incorporate other suggestions (e.g., "Conclusion could be more developed"). In order to earn a significant proportion of points possible, students need to not only correct conventions errors, but also to engage in deep revision. This is not a proofreading exercise, and the scoring guide can help with specific suggestions for true revision. (30 to 40 points possible–

not as many as the previous draft in order to foster independent best efforts, but definitely worth doing.)

- Note: It is helpful for students, teachers, and portfolio reviewers if students keep all drafts of papers. (Most find it helpful to go from the bottom up, with the most recent draft always stapled to the top of previous drafts and pre-writes.) This helps evaluators see "raw" student work, input from peers and teachers, and an overview of the student's process.

Integrating the Statewide Writing Assessment into the Classroom (with Tips for Helping Students Do Their Best)

As Oregon schools phase in the Education Act for the 21st Century, a student's performance on the Statewide Writing Assessment becomes a critical part of his or her qualification for a Certificate of Initial Mastery. Regardless of the legislation, however, many teachers have for years valued the feedback their students receive from an "outside" evaluation of their writing, and some have devised ways in which to incorporate the assessment into their instruction in a meaningful way. It is also important to prepare students for the assessment and to create an environment in which they will be able to do good work. Following are some suggestions for classroom teachers:

- Inform students early in the year that they will participate in the assessment in the spring. Emphasize that you value the assessment, and that it can give everyone (students, teachers, parents, administrators) some good information about their progress as writers. Assure them that if they will give you their attention throughout the year and try their best to improve as writers, they will perform in a satisfactory manner on the assessment. Let them know that you're in this together, with you as their coach.

- Refer to the assessment on a regular basis throughout the year, not to raise the anxiety level, but to prepare students for what is to come. No one likes surprises.

- Frame the assessment as part of their total collection of work samples and accomplishments as writers. Their portfolios will contain several samples of their writing; this assessment represents how they responded to a particular prompt on a particular day under some degree of time constraint and no access to outside resources other than a dictionary, electronic spell check, and thesaurus.

- Talk to your administrators and ask that the assessment be administered during a time that will make most sense for students. Usually, teachers feel students do their best during the middle of the week, and during the middle of the morning. Ask that a teacher administer the assessment who will communicate a sense of valuing the assessment and who will establish an atmosphere that is orderly, quiet, and conducive to good writing. (Many classroom teachers like to administer the assessment to their own students during the time at which they usually have English class.) Be sure the administrator of the assessment understands that resources such as dictionaries, electronic spell-checkers, and thesauruses may be available for student use, and that arrangements can be made for students to finish the assessment who have not completed it within the suggested time frame.

- A week or so before the assessment, remind students that it is approaching. Remind them, as when preparing to do well on any test, to get a good night's sleep and to eat a

good breakfast. (If your school provides snacks for students on occasion, see if you can get some for your students to eat as they listen to directions.)

- At some point before the assessment, discuss some issues with students that will help them make good choices of prompts. Many students, particularly younger ones, will automatically choose the prompt that interests them most, and that's probably the most important criterion. However, students should also consider the mode the prompt is intended to elicit and think about whether or not that particular mode is a strength of theirs. For example, if a student is attracted to a prompt designed to elicit the persuasive mode, and the student knows from experience that he or she often has trouble with that mode, perhaps, on this occasion, it would be wiser to examine other prompts with that in mind.

- After your students have finished the assessment, make copies of their writing before sending them off to your designated Scoring Site. Then, during the next class period, return the students' essays to them; have them self-score, using the scoring guide, just as they have done with other writing throughout the year. Some teachers whose students feel very comfortable with peer scoring also have a peer score each essay. Finally, the teacher scores each essay. The writing is then filed until the essays get returned to the school, almost always before the school year ends. At that time, compare self-scores, peer scores, teacher scores, and those assigned by the two trained professional readers at the official Scoring Site. Take a poll to see how the scores compare, and discuss. Offer to let students read their writing aloud, as hopefully they have become accustomed to do. Some classes have small celebrations when teachers have felt their students, for the most part, tried hard.

- Some teachers assign a grade in the grade book for students' writing generated during the assessment. They reason that if they're taking the equivalent of three class periods for the assessment, it is entirely justified to assess and grade the writing; this is especially appropriate if, on occasion, students have had a writing assignment similar to the assessment itself in that they respond to a limited choice of prompts and do not have access to outside sources of information.

- When the assessment results are returned to students in late spring, many teachers organize lessons so that they may have a private mini-conference with each student to go over scores, help interpret them, and help put them into a more complete perspective of the student's overall strengths and weaknesses as perceived throughout the year.

- During parent-teacher conferences, either in the spring or in the following fall, use the essays written for the assessment (and included in the student's portfolio) as a vehicle for communicating with the parent about the student's progress. Try student-led conferences, in which students take their parents on a tour of their portfolios, including a look at the piece written for the Statewide Assessment and the scores it received.

Chapter 4
Sample Student Papers

The sample student work that follows was written in the context of either the Writing Assessment itself or in pilots conducted each fall to help refine the prompts before the actual assessments. It is published here to help clarify the Scoring Guide and its application. All the pieces are anonymous, and the names of all characters, schools, and towns have been changed, along with other minor details that might lead to the identification of a particular writer (such as the name of a particular class); to help ensure anonymity, every high school is named Oregon High School, and every town or city in Oregon is named either Oregontown or Cedarbrook.

For each trait, a total of at least seven papers will appear: two that exceed the standard with a score of 5 or 6; two that meet the standard with a score of 4; two that just miss the standard with a score of 3; and one that falls quite short of the standard with a score of 1 or 2. The hope is that students and teachers will more clearly understand the Scoring Guide and the standards as they see examples of papers that have scored at particular points on the scale. (See Chapter 2 for ideas about how to use these papers as part of instruction in the language arts classroom.)

Each paper has been selected because it has earned a particular score for the particular trait being addressed; this does not mean it has earned this score for other traits, of course. Student writing is often a mix of strengths and weaknesses, so while a paper might have been chosen to illustrate a low score point in a particular trait, it may well have strengths in other traits, and vice-versa. It is important to keep each trait separate in one's mind during the scoring process, even though, realistically, all traits work together to create a whole piece. Each piece has been reprinted here exactly as it was written, complete with minor and major errors. A brief commentary precedes each piece, and all quotes in the commentaries are either directly from the Scoring Guide or from the student paper that follows the commentary.

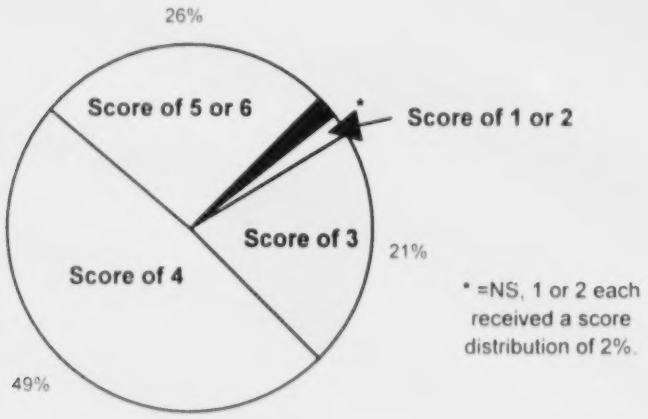
Sample papers written by 10th and 11th graders will appear first (for all traits), followed by those written by 8th graders.

Grades 10 and 11

Ideas and Content

In 1997, the average score for tenth graders on the trait of Ideas and Content was 4.0. Overall, 75% of the scores received met the standard for the tenth grade benchmark (a 4 or above) with 26% of the scores being a 5 or a 6. In order to observe trends in this scoring area over time, refer to the bar graph on page 10. The NS category on the pie chart below represents the papers that were determined not scorable. For an explanation of non-scorable papers, see pages 76-77.

Score Distribution at Grade 10: Ideas and Content, 1997



Sample Papers

Exceeds the Standard (Score of 5 or 6): *The following two papers were selected because they are "clear, focused, and interesting," and they contain strong, relevant details that develop the ideas. The first piece is a personal narrative that scored a 5 because of the insights contained in the first and last paragraphs; it is often this sense of making connections and sharing insights beyond a straight recounting of events that distinguishes papers above the standard of 4.*

Seeking independance, as in rebellion, is something I just don't do. I mean others go and do rash things, just to show their parents how independant they are; but me? No not me. I gave it a real try once. Looking back it seems really kind of silly, and without much point.

I was in seventh grade, and attending junior high school. We of course had other names for that place. When I say we, I mean my grade school buddies and me. Every morning before the sun had risen, my two neighbors and I would all wait for the bus together. All of us had so far grown up together in a small rural farming community. Each of us were still adjusting in our own ways to attending school with over one thousand students. So it was almost by spontaneous consensus that we decided to become rebels.

Many days after school were spent in my neighbor's basement in the devising and construction of a varied assortment of incendiary devices. Some of them even worked. Our

success caused us to soon bore of cautious testings down by our creek. To prove our rebellious abilities we had to have a real test.

The plan was to sneak out at midnight and unleash ourselves upon the local community. For several nights we all seemed to keep falling asleep, or at least claimed to have.

Finally we did have our planned rendezvous. Each dressed in an odd assortment of black T-shirts and camo, we proceeded in a stealthy, ninja style down the street. I remember several minutes of stressed discussion ensuing. My neighbor and apparent chief rebel finally did the deed. The explosion ironically was very pretty and virtually silent. We hadn't even succeeded in waking a dog. We somewhat disappointedly had to admit that we made pretty good fireworks, but were poor rebels.

We also knew that we were the only teenagers around for miles, and in our community we would be blamed for any disturbances. We found that being a rebel was impractical and soon gave up.

The only thing I really can remember was how cold it was and me being really tired the next day. Perhaps I gained more independance in coming to the realization that I should be in bed, without needing my parents telling me.

* * * * * * * * * *

This second paper, in addition to strengths in Ideas and Content, is an example of a paper that exceeds the standard in all six traits. It is also an example of a very strong persuasive paper, although the author could have made it even stronger by anticipating objections to her position and answering them. Finally, this paper shows what students can do within the two-page limitation: the author did not utilize the full space provided on the two-page test booklet, and although her writing was admittedly small, it was legible.

To the Superintendent of Oregontown School District:
Dear Mr. Rivers:

I, along with other students and teachers at my school, have noticed that the high school education system in this city is languishing. As it is now, the daily class schedule of a typical high school student breeds boredom, entails busywork, and does not provide teachers with ample time to truly educate their pupils. Students are not interested in learning, and teachers–as well as students–are burnt out by the daily grind of six or seven full classes.

I propose that the school schedule be modified so that each day has only three classes, with each period lasting two hours. A student would still have six classes; the first three would be held one day and the second three would be held the next. Fridays could be devoted to individual study time, and/or individual conferences with teachers.

There are many advantages to instituting such a schedule. One is that teachers would have a substantial chunk of time to devote to teaching. So often lessons are rushed and squeezed into 45 or 50 minute periods, and students rarely have time to get their questions answered. This is particularly a problem in math and science classes, where new, confusing material is introduced each day. With a two hour period, teachers could give a more relaxed, detailed lesson on the subject matter, and would have time to do extensive laboratory work or hold in-depth discussions on the material.

Part of the two hour class period could also be devoted to homework or study time. Instead of sitting at home, struggling alone over an assignment that was hurriedly explained at the end of a class period, a student could work out problems and achieve a firm understanding of the material by working in class with the teacher and other students.

Another advantage to a block schedule is that, with only three classes to prepare for each day, students could focus more effectively and more efficiently on their subjects. Having to prepare for six or seven classes each night does not promote good learning or study skills; it simply breeds disjointed, frantic, cram-style study habits that do little to help one absorb and understand the material. A block schedule would also reduce the boredom and burn out which

often develops in students who have to go through the same, monotonous six period routine everyday.

A block schedule would prepare students for a college-like environment, since in college one usually takes four classes that meet only a few times a week. Getting used to longer class periods, growing accustomed to learning subject matter in-depth, and developing personal responsibility for getting assignments done without daily reminders from teachers are all skills that are crucial to success in college. These skills are also necessary for students going on to vocational training or into the workplace. Patience, time management, and perseverence–which would be developed by a block schedule–are important life skills.

It is clear then that there are many advantages to implementing a block schedule in this city's secondary level education system. If we want American education to meet the standards of other nations, we must construct a schedule that fosters a good learning environment and allows for a healthy, relaxed teacher-student exchange. The block schedule is certainly not a new idea–it is currently used in many European countries–and it should be instituted in our own schools as well.

Thank you for your time, and please take into consideration the arguments I have set forth today.

Sincerely,
a concerned student

* * * * * * * * * *

Meets the Standard (Score of 4): *The two papers that follow both meet the standard because they are "clear and focused"... with "main ideas and supporting details that are relevant." The topics are adequately explored or explained. In the first piece, some insight is also present in the final paragraph when the writer explains or generalizes what she learned as a result of the embarrassing experience she narrates.*

Adults would say that in junior high I was "socially behind." What that meant to everyone at my school was that I was a real loner. I suppose they were right, I was pretty lonely then. I didn't have many friends and most people avoided me like whatever made me so pathetic could rub off on them.

Each day while walking through the school hallways, I worried about how people were looking at me and thinking how ugly and nerdy I was. What I feared most was for the entire hallway of kids to burst out laughing at my expense. As a result of this fear I hardly ever smiled and I could never look anyone in the eyes. I was too afraid they'd look straight into me and see how much of a dork I was.

Then it happened. I was running over to the student store line when I tripped, flew into the air and landed face-down in front of the entire line of people! After a moment of shocked silence my worst fear became reality, everyone laughed at me. I remember laying there and wishing I could sink through the ground into non-existence when a strange thought popped into my head...this was actually funny! Those people weren't laughing because I was a dork but because seeing someone, anyone, land flat on their face is a pretty amuzing occurance! A smile crept onto my lips and by the time I had picked myself off the ground I was laughing too.

Things have improved since then, though I suppose I'll always be a little "socially behind." Fortunately, now I've learned that what people think of you is greatly determined by how you behave towards them. Now I'm not afraid to look people in the eyes and smile because most of the time, they smile back.

* * * * * * * * * *

The following piece also meets the standard for Ideas and Content (just barely) because it has an "easily identifiable purpose" (to narrate a close call), and "clear main ideas."

Additionally, "s̄u̲pport is present, although it is limited." Further development is clearly desirable, but it does meet the standard.

Last summer when I was logging I came really close to getting killed. I was working down in the bottom of a steep canyon putting cables around the logs so they could be pulled to the top of the hill by a big yarder.

We had just finished pulling all of the logs from one section of the hill and it was time to move the skyline to a new anchor tree. So I walked down to the bottom and hooked it up to another tree about one hundred feet away. I stepped back out of the way and signaled three whistles which told the operator to tighten the skyline. As the long cable that stretched all the way across the canyon tightened it got hung up on a stump. So then I blew another whistle for the operator to stop all lines. I couldnt move the cable over the stump so I got mad and gave him the signal to tighten it again. Right when the cable was so tight that something had to break I relized I was standing in the bite of the line. Right that second I thought I was dead. I dropped to the ground as fast as I could hitting hard in the broken limbs. As soon as I hit the ground the stump that the cable was caught on split in half and fifteen hundred feet of 3/4 cable wizzed by my head missing me by centimeters. As the heavy cable went over my head it ripped everything out of the ground in its path except for me. Ever since then I have been a little more careful.

* * * * * * * * * *

Does Not Meet the Standard (Score of 3): *The following paper illustrates the point that length does not necessarily mean adequate development. In this case, the developmental details are "limited in scope...predictable...and overly general." The main ideas themselves are "overly obvious,...overly broad and simplistic," and "seem to echo observations heard elsewhere" (i.e., music is important in a person's life). The writer here needed to illustrate her points with some specific examples of artists, particular CD's or songs, or even a musical style or genre.*

Could you imagine a world without music? Theres so many people that don't realize just how important music really is. I was one of those people, music was just one of those little things that were "just there," it meant nothing to me, except for its convenient entertainment purposes. That was the extent of my musical feelings, that is, until I got my first sterio. Now I have learned Just how important music truely is, and now imagining the world without music is defently a thought I would rather avoid!

I quickly learned that music can really cheer you up when your down. Theres no better way to brighten a dull, sad face than with the exciteing sounds of loud electric guitars and fast rythm. Just sitting alone with only the music as your company will most defently bring your spirits to a rise and put a smile on your face.

I know, now, that music can really liven up a dead party. The rythmic flow of heavy metal slashing its way through a room full of quiet people can really lighten the mood up and bring them out of there shells. When the exciting tunes find there way into everyones mind and body, many new personalities and reverse sides arise and open up fresh possibilities.

Music is a great way to express your feelings. I have learned many new and unique ways to tell someone how much I love them through the deep and intense sounds of romantic music. Spending endless hours listening to fun romantic music can really bring you closer to the one you love. Music can create such a romantic atmosphere, that your bodies will soon be bubbleing over with wonderful emotion as soon as you enter the musically intised room. Quickly transform your everday room into a hot love lare by Just simply playing your favorite slow CD.

Now that I realize all the great sides of music, I can't go a single day without it. Music gives me a soft shoulder to cry on and gives me a smile when Im frowning. Music brings excitement, romance and happiness into my life. I couldn't imagine being without my music, it would be like being without my best friend.

* * * * * * * * * *

A reader might be tempted to score this next paper higher than the scoring guide calls for because the topic is clearly about something very important and emotional for the writer: the deaths of loved ones. Nevertheless, it is important to tie all scores to the scoring guide, and, in this case, "the reader can understand the main ideas," although they are "overly broad, and...supporting detail is...limited and overly general." For example, the writer never identifies exactly who died. The closest the writer comes to specific detail is the paragraph about the support received from sisters. It's important for students to narrow down the purposely open-ended prompts to something they can write about with some specificity; if they find that the direction in which they've taken the prompt is too personal or emotional to write about with specifics, then they should choose a different topic. The prompts are open-ended enough to allow an almost infinite number of variations, and students have three of these open-ended prompts from which to choose.

How can a person learn how to deal with a death of a loved one or a friend? No one really knows until it happens to them.

I managed to loose two people in a period of two years. In school teachers can't make you experience the pain and the sorrow of death. Teachers and counselors can say what happens but you'll never know how it feels until it occurs.

My family knows how it feels, I learned from my familys encounter with the departure of a loved one. It taught me how to deal with my emotions and my thoughts.

With all the emotions I felt, I didn't know how to feel, I was confused and hurt because of their leaving. I dealt with it by sorting my thoughts and telling myself that everything would be fine. I had to think to myself that its one of lifes obstacles that will teach me a tough lesson.

My sisters helped me understand what happened and what happens after death. My sisters were my support, their support was the main thing that got me though the deaths. We all had to listen to each others feelings and thoughts. I also learned that it had alot to do with myself. I had to sort my feeling. I had to understand what happens. I had to get through it by myself in my own way, and I had to learn that time helps the heartache heal.

Experienceing the death of loved ones made me stronger in character. I know now how to feel and to tell the people that I care about that I love them.

* * * * * * * * * *

Does Not Meet the Standard (Score of 2): *The following paper earned a score of 2 because "development is attempted but minimal." There is insufficient detail to explain or develop the idea.*

I feel that teens working at a Job in high school is a good Idea. Teens need to learn responsibility in high school so that they can become responsible as young adults. Teen agers need money because they like to do stuff that cost money, without money you can't do anything.

Sometimes if you take a Job when you graduate you don't have to look for work so it saves you alot of work and time.

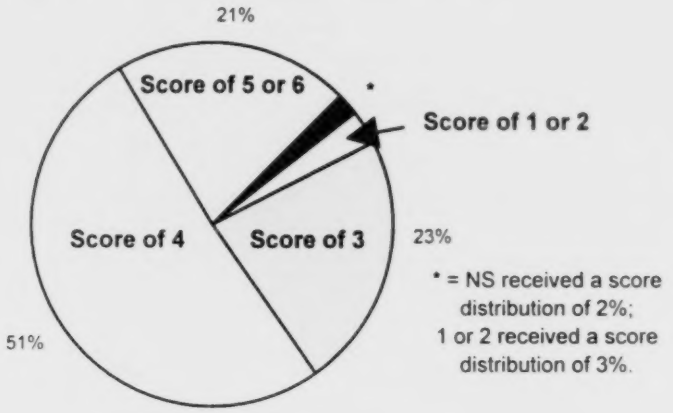
I think a Job in high school is a good Idea because you learn more responsibility which is something good for you to learn.

* * * * * * * * * *

Organization

In 1997, the average score for tenth graders on the trait of Organization was 3.9. Overall, 72% of the scores received met the standard for the tenth grade benchmark (a 4 or above) with 21% of the scores being a 5 or a 6. In order to observe trends in this scoring area over time, refer to the bar graph on page 10. The NS category on the pie chart below represents the papers that were not scorable. For an explanation of non-scorable papers, see pages 76-77.

Score Distribution at Grade 10: Organization, 1997


21%
Score of 5 or 6
•
Score of 1 or 2
Score of 4
Score of 3
23%
51%
• = NS received a score distribution of 2%; 1 or 2 received a score distribution of 3%.

Sample Papers

Exceeds the Standard (Score of 5 or 6): *The following two pieces exceed the standard for Organization. In the first paper, the opening paragraph is unusual and inviting, particularly for a persuasive piece. The second paragraph, which introduces a counter-argument and then responds to it, does not confuse the reader about the writer's position, a common pitfall in persuasive writing for many 10th graders. Transitions among sentences and paragraphs work well, although the ending is undeveloped and more characteristic of a score point of 4.*

Once the school bell rings, students pour out of the classrooms, into the hallways scrambling to their lockers. Some head for home while others stay for a long workout at practice. But according to surveys, the majority of U. S. students in their junior and senior high school years have part-time jobs throughout the year. Many parents and citizens are concerned that this may affect the students work and achievement in high school. But does it?

A common arguement against students working is that they have no time for schoolwork. But every student that goes out for a sport in high school spends the equivalent or more amount of time as a student who works. A student who is in sports has to practice each night that they don't have a game and on away games, they may not get home until midnight or even after. But parents and citizens don't preach against sports because it "builds character" or its a "school activity." Students who also play sports must have a 2.0 grade point average to play. So if athletes who practice and play games can get a 2.0 grade point average so can a student who works part time.

Even though working may prohibit students from extracurricular activities students who work can get into a school program that gives them credits for working. Work experience is a

program where students can go to the counselor and they can fit work experience into their schedule. The student gets evaluated while on the work sight and the student gets graded on how he or she works. They can put this on the resume when applying for a job and an employer can contact the school and see how well the student worked. So it gives students a better chance for a job opportunity in the future. Also, being in this program the school can keep track of grades and how the work is affecting their school work.

After school students who are not involved in school activities have a higher risk of getting in trouble due to the fact that they have so much more freedom. But when a student works they have an obligation after school thus, teaching them responsibility. Being on a constant schedule will teach them punctuality and appreciate the free time they do have. It also helps them prepare for tight schedules when they get into college life. (Since most college students work.)

Lessons and achievements do not always come from schools. Students who work can find the best lessons and personal achievements just from experience.

* * * * * * * * * *

The following paper also exceeds the standard for Organization. It follows a chronological sequence for the most part, although the beginning and ending make generalizations that go beyond a simple chronology. Transitions are smooth and effective; they are much more subtle and graceful than the usual "so...," "then...," "and then..." found in a chronology. The beginning two paragraphs are inviting, especially considering that the paper is primarily expository (it is also a narration–definitely a "mode-merger").

I have always enjoyed opportunities to be creative, so when my ninth grade science teacher assigned a project of building a model car and racing it, I was enthralled. Our materials were unlimited, as long as we stayed under a length of ten inches and used no power other than a C battery and a small motor with which we were provided.

I soon found a partner, and we set to work. Both of us were intent on winning the prize for "Most Creative Car", and for a few days we thoroughly brainstormed to come up with any unique ideas that would be mechanically sound. Our favorite idea was that of a car with only one wheel, but we were not certain as to whether this was actually a physical possibility.

A few weeks later, after much experimenting and failure, we discovered that by using a lightweight cylindrical container, such as a plastic peanut butter jar, and attaching a short piece of pipe to the lid, we could insert the battery into the pipe and glue the motor on to the end. We then could affix a lead weight onto the end of the motor, which would, as the motor accelerated, propel the entire jar backward. The result was a clear, cylindrical jar with a turquoise lid and a bizarre looking commodity within.

My colleague and I silently carried the car which we had dubbed "P.B. Max" into the classroom the following day. As we proudly removed our masterpiece from a shoe box marked "CONFIDENTIAL," the entire class broke into shrieks of laughter and cries of "That isn't a car! A car has to have more than one wheel!", etc. We quietly proceeded, smiling at the fact that we were different. Most of the other students hadn't been daring enough to be original.

We hoped that we would place well as far as speed, but we were most concerned with the fun of the project, and therefore probably learned more than a lot of our fellow classmates. The instructor didn't mind our creativity, and we went on with the race.

About halfway into the competition, P.B. Max was placing second and the class had stopped laughing. They were beginning to realize that creativity is what has produced many of the great things of the world. They were also beginning to realize that their cars were being beaten by a peanut butter jar! Unfortunately, at about this time, P.B. Max's battery started running low, and it took longer to get started.

We finished sixth, but we won the "Most Creative Car" award, and learned a great deal about physical science. Most importantly, however, we proved a point to ourselves and others: that quality does not always mean that something is the biggest, or the fastest or the most socially

acceptable. Quality means that one worked hard and though about it and learned a lot; and that one shouldn't laugh at a new idea, because the only way to have success is to first fail.

* * * * * * * * * *

Meets the Standard (Score of 4): *The following two papers both meet the standard score for Organization. The first one is a good illustration of the merits of the analytic model. Although it needs work in conventions to meet the standard, it has strengths in Ideas and Content, Organization, and Voice. According to the scoring guide for Organization, it exceeds the standard because it has "an inviting beginning that draws the reader in, and...a satisfying sense of resolution or closure" because the reader is left wondering about the future of this incorrigible toy-lover's preoccupation. The overall organizational structure, however, is predictable, and the transitions are formulaic ("First," "then"), which mean the overall score is a 4. It is still a fine paper with "clear sequencing" and an organization which "helps the reader."*

A fanatic that I know would have to be my uncle Mike. He is always going off the deep end for toys. Every since I can remember, he has had something, somewhere, to play with. He is just one of those people that will never grow out of toys.

First, he had radio controlled model airplanes that he would buy, build, fly, and then crash. He wasn't a very good piolot and pretty soon, at $300 a plane, he decided that it was too much money. He was good at building the models and they always turned out very well. He still has three or four planes left that he is afraid to fly.

The next hobbie to come, was scale model racing hydroplane boats. First he just built one and bought all of the things that he needed to make it run. Then, in no time at all, he had three boats, and then four, and finally five boats. At $500 dollars a boat, he stopped buying them and started running them. The biggest problems with the boats is that it is about 50 miles to the nearest place to run them. Pretty soon that hobbie went down the drain too.

After those little radio controlled boats, he desided to build one that he could ride in. The boat is just under eleven feet long, weighs 150 pounds, and will go over 70 mph. He ran this boat most of the summer and it was one of the cheapest hobbies he has had. But now he will sell the boat to start his new hobbie, model trains.

Mike got started in model trains this fall and has gone head over heels for them. He has built a huge track with tunnels, hills, and turns on it. He has bought five locomotives and about twenty train cars. It is a good hobbie for him and now all I have to do is wait and see how long it lasts.

* * * * * * * * * *

This next paper also meets the standard for Organization. It is clear and coherent, with an organizational structure that is definitely present, although somewhat "predictable and rigid; it seems to have been artificially imposed on the writing, rather than being a natural fit." A sentence in the opening paragraph states that a job "teaches responsibility, disipline, and a good look at reality," and, as the reader might predict, each of the three paragraphs in the body of the essay is, in sequence, about each of those points. Although there is clear sequencing, the piece is formulaic, including the transitions between paragraphs ("Second,...And last...").

To work or not to work. That is the question. Is it good that high school students go to school, and have a part time job? I think that it teaches responsibility, disipline, and a good look at reality. I have found this to be true with the part time job I have, working as a box boy at a small store.

To have a job, and go to school is often time very stressful, but always rewarding. The feeling of accomplishment, that you get, is a very self gratifing thing. It takes a lost of responsibility, that high school students are ready to learn. And that is something schools can't

always teach. Sure its responsibility to do the homework assigned; but your not going to be doing homework all your life. But a job, you will have.

Second, it takes disipline to keep the job. Many times I have gotton a job and wanted to quit a few months later, because its hard. It takes a lot of motivation to keep going on with it. Which is something we also will use the rest of our lives. If high school students don't disipline themselves now, when will they?

And last, the most important, reality. We need to realize that many of the students will go on to college and most will have to work to pay for the bills. One of the many reasons I still have my job, is because I realize that I'll have to work when I go to college. And I better get used to the hardships now, than to wake up to reality later.

Many students realize how much they can achieve when they try. They often think that they can't do both, but often it suprises them to what they can do.

* * * * * * * * * *

Does Not Meet the Standard (Score of 3): *The following piece earned a score of 3 primarily because it contains "a beginning and an ending which, although present, are either undeveloped or too obvious." In addition, although the chronological sequence of events is fairly clear, "the order or relationship among ideas is occasionally unclear," perhaps at least in part because of the nature of the details included. It is also characterized by placement of details that is not always effective.*

Kyle and his father Tom were on their way to Tom's sister's house in Austrailya for their 2 week vacation for Chrismas. Kevin is a sophomore in high school.

Tom had taken 2 weeks vacation time off work. Tom own's a construction company. Going to Tom's sister, Sue's house for vacation would be good because he just finished a messy devorce between him and Kyle's mother.

They arrived at Sue's house about noon. They left California the morning before, stayed the night at a motel at the airport in Austrailya, then rented a Jeep for the drive. As soon as the got there Kyle went for a walk, Tom went and talked to his sister in the house.

Sue own's a vary large house almost a mansion. It has many rooms and is about 3 1/2 storys. She has one family living with her since she dosen't have a family of her own.

Later on in the evening Kyle arrived back at the house, his aunt decided to have a party so everyone could meet. Kyle first noticed a young girl he learned was named Tammy. Tammy was the most beautiful girl he had seen ever. As He ate dinner Kyle felt clumbsy in front of her. After dinner Kyle went up and introduced himself to her. Kyle said "Hi, my name is Kyle, I'm from California."

Tammy said "hello my name is Tammy." They shook hands.

For the rest of the evening they talked. They found they had a lot in common, supprizingly. Then they decided they would go horseback riding the next day.

The next morning Kyle awoke and ate breakfast. Tammy came over as soon as Kyle finished. They went and got the horses and took off for the desert.

Tom and Sue were discussing what him and his son would do. They decided that Tom and Kyle would move in down in Austrailya.

Kyle arrived back at the house later that night. After helping Tammy put the horses back in the coral. Tom decided not to tell Kyle yet about the move. He wasn't shur how Kyle would take it, living in the desert. Kyle told his dad all about the ride through the desert. And how he wished he could live there. That made things on Tom alot easyer. So Tom started right out and told Kyle they were staying.

The next morning Kyle went right over to Tammy and told her the news, then just blurted out "I realy like you Tammy."

Tammy sayed she felt the same. later on they went for another ride. And the next day and next, all they did for a month straite was ride horses.

* * * * * * * * * *

The next paper scores a low 3 in Organization. "An attempt has been made to organize the writing,...but the structure is skeletal." A beginning and ending are present, but they are both undeveloped (one rather general sentence each) and too obvious. Transitions work sometimes, but, for the most part, there are no transitions between one kind of physical activity listed and the next. This paper borders on being "too short to demonstrate organizational skills," as described in the 2 score point, but it's not difficult to follow and there is some sequencing.

There are many things I like to do to try and stay physically fit. The things I am most consistent with is jogging, and step aerobics. I like doing the step aerobics the most, because it helps me stay in shape, and it is fun. Jogging isn't that fun, but is really good exercise, and burns allot of calories and fat. My favorite water activities are swimming and water-skiing. Swimming helps build your arm and leg muscles, and it is not as high impact as jogging and step aerobics. Swimming also is a good summer sport because of the hot weather. Water-skiing is really fun, and is good for your legs. Even though it doesn't seem like a physical activity, water-skiing is a good way to stay physically fit.

There are many ways I like to stay physically fit, and they all are different, and work in different ways.

* * * * * * * * * *

Does Not Meet the Standard (Score of 2): *In the following paper, "an occasional organizational structure is discernible" (i.e., a statement of a conditional position followed by potential drawbacks to working),...but "the piece is simply too short to demonstrate organizational skills." It is also missing an ending. It is not a 1 because it does not lack coherence and it is not confusing for the reader.*

I think that for a junior or a Senior in high school to have a part-time job is okay if they need the money for if they live on their own or the they have other expenses.

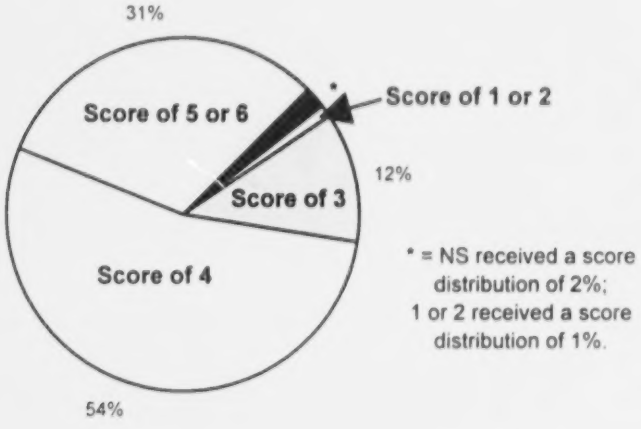
But it can get very stressful and very tiring at times so much that it gets in the way of your schoolwork and your sleeping habits. also it would take away your time for your homework and your studying.

* * * * * * * * * *

Voice

In 1997, the average score for tenth graders on the trait of Voice was 4.2. Although students are not required to receive a minimum score to meet a standard in the area of Voice, this trait is scored to provide additional information on students' writing. Overall, 85% of the scores received were a 4 or above, with 31% of the scores being a 5 or a 6. In order to observe trends in this scoring area over time, refer to the bar graph on page 10. The NS category on the pie chart below represents the papers that were not scorable. For an explanation of non-scorable papers, see pages 76-77.

Score Distribution at Grade 10: Voice, 1997


31%
Score of 5 or 6
Score of 1 or 2
12%
Score of 3
Score of 4
* = NS received a score distribution of 2%; 1 or 2 received a score distribution of 1%.
54%

Sample Papers

High: *The following paper, in addition to other strengths, scored high in Voice. "The writer seems deeply committed to the topic, and there is an exceptional sense of 'writing to be read.'" The topic is a friend of the writer who is a fan of the Boston Red Sox and there is definitely a "sense that the topic has come to life," with humor, originality, and an engaging style.*

As far as fanatical people are concerned there are some that simply stand head and shoulders above the rest. One such person is RB Adler. At five feet six inches tall, and weighing in at one hundred and twenty pounds, he is solid sports information. Someone might easily mistake RB for a seventh or eighth grader, but he is a lightning quick, sophomore point guard with moves as smooth as a Miles Davis tune.

Although RB is a basketball player he salivates uncontrollably when someone, anyone, mentions three short words: Boston Red Sox. If one were simply to talk about Beantown with RB anywhere in the vacinity, he would instantly gravitate to your side and steer the conversation toward his beloved, and often beleaguered, Sox.

All that anyone would have to see how fanatical RB feels, is undress him and examine his clothes. We shall start with the outmost apparel and work in.

First of all is the traditional and understated navy blue hat with the bright red "B" that all of the players he has elevated to demi-god status, wear. Next comes the similarly understated navy jacket, except this time there are red stockings sewed on the left breast. RB looks so natural

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

with the hat pulled down nearly covering his eyes and the jacket open except for a couple of snaps at the bottom.

Next we can take a quick look at the shoes which are the Reebok Preseason athletic shoe. These are endorsed by the only man since Jesus that RB believes can walk on water, pitcher Roger Clemens.

In weight lifting class when RB peels off the ever-present jacket, one can see the next layer of Red Sox pride. This one usually consisting of various teeshirts or sweatshirts, which he has a seemingly endless supply.

Finally we get to the trusty boxer shorts and threadbare velcro wallet. But he is rarely separated from either, neverthe less.

Not only does RB sport the gear of his team, he also has statistics for every major player ever to don a Red Sox uniform so deeply ingrained in his cerebral crevasses that he sometimes does not have a lot of space left for his school work.

To me RB exemplifies every facet contained in the generalization of "ultimate fan". In fact he should be the centerpiece of any new marketing ideas the Red Sox have because he is the Ultimate Fan.

* * * * * * * * * *

High: *This writer "has chosen a voice appropriate for the topic, purpose, and audience. The writer seems committed to the topic, and there is a sense of 'writing to be read.' The writing is expressive, engaging, and sincere" as he recounts with understated humor a series of incidents in which he "should have died."*

In my lifetime I have had several occasions where I should have died. I'm either really lucky for not dieing or just invincible.

My quest for serious injuries started when I was 5 years old. My brother decided to launch me with his feet across the room. I hit my head on the tile under the wood stove and went to the hospital to get patched up. About 1 year later my brother threw a big top at my head and made it stick in my forehead. We went to the hospital and got some more stitches. I went a few years with no injuries and then one day in the 6th grade I was riding my bike home from school and got macked by a station wagon. I flew over the hood and hit my face on a telephone pole. The ambulance called my mom at work to tell her I might live. My face was one giant scab and I was really lucky to live through that, but I guess that's what happens when you go the speed limit on the sidewalk. The summer after that I went to Forest Lake with my brother. We went to some huge rock to jump off into the water. I climbed up a huge rock with no water under it. I started slipping but corrected myself, the second time I started slipping it was different. I ended up falling off a 40 ft. rock. It was such a long fall that the entire way down I knew I was going to die. When I landed, I luckily landed feet first. People were yelling to see if I was alright but I couldn't answer because I had the wind knocked out of me. When I finally started breathing again I stood up and dropped right back down to the ground. I ended up breaking both my feet and most of my toes. I spent the summer in a wheelchair with two casts up to my knees. The following summer I was lowering my basketball hoop to slam dunk level and it fell on my head cramping my neck up sending me to the emergency room another time. The summer after that I was breaking up a dog fight and became part of it. My dog had another dogs head in his mouth and while I was prying it open he bit me. The doctor stitched up my head and put me on antibiotics. That pretty much explains why I might be invincible.

* * * * * * * * * *

Mid-Range: *In this piece, the writing is, "in places, ...expressive, engaging, and sincere." Overall, the piece has a personal voice, which is appropriate for a personal narrative such as this. The reader can "glimpse the writer behind the words and feel a sense of*

interaction in places," even though the voice of the writer seems somewhat quiet, even shy, and the first half of the story is told in a fairly flat, straightforward tone.

It was late in a midsummer day and I had just gotten done cutting a field of hay.

I walked into my grandpa's house to put down my time on the calendar. My grandpa said "pack your bags you are headed to Oregontown (on the coast) for two weeks."

I have an uncle who is a commercial fisherman. He lives in Oregontown where his boat is moored.

When I got to Oregontown he told me what we would be doing. Then he handed me a prescription for motion sickness patches to be filled at the drugstore.

When I got back I asked how long we would be on the ocean. He said "we will be out for about five days. Then I almost got sick thinking of not seeing land for five days.

The next day at 4:00 am. we went shoping at Safeway. At six o'clock we took on ice and at 7:00 am. we took on fuel. At 7:30 am. we left the harbor.

At 6:00 pm. we got to the spot where the fish were.

By this time I was so sick that I wanted to go home again. I was out over the rail puking my guts out when my uncle noticed I had the patch under the wrong ear. He told me to put it on the other side and by 9:00 pm. I was eating like a glutton.

That trip only lasted three days because we filled the hold to the top and there was no more room. My uncle and the crew said that my vomit attracted the fish.

On that trip I learned more things than I can count. Some of the things were baiting hooks, driving the boat, reading the fish finder, getting the daily weather report, and keeping watch at night incase we got in the way of a freighter.

We went on three more trips in two weeks. This is an experience I will never forget. I made friends with the whole crew of the "Little L."

* * * * * * * * * *

The writing in this next paper also earned a 4 in Voice. It seems sincere, lively, and engaging for the first half, when the writer is narrating an incident about her habit of taking her shoes off in class. When she moves to her overall point or message, however, the writing seems to become somewhat flat. The voice doesn't come through to the reader as it did in the beginning of the piece, especially during the final point she makes.

"Don't take your shoes off in class." I've been admonished three times already, and admittedly there is no reason to keep kicking off my shiny little Mary Janes except that it made a lovely clicking sound and I like the feeling of cool air on my toes. Brrrring! I am too shocked to move. Students file hurriedly out the door, still young enough to regard a routine fire drill as some real emergency and not just a hassle. In a panic, I try to cram my feet into the shoes, but the new leather refuses to accomodate my anxious toes and eventually I am forced to leave my shoes behind and run outside in pursuit of my class. After suffering cold feet, bruised toes and the teasing of classmates I came to the conclusion that taking my shoes off in class was not such a good idea. From that time on, I kept my shoes on in class. My basic point is that we can be told to do something a thousand times, we can even choose to obey; but until we actually experience things we don't learn anything. If school involved more "hand's on" type activities we might learn more and (amazingly) have some fun too. So, quit taking everything you're told so seriously, go out and experience something today, it's one of the few things in life that is truely yours.

* * * * * * * * * *

Low: *A decision facing any author is that of establishing an appropriate distance from or closeness to both audience and topic. Clearly, if an author is writing a technical manual that is simply supposed to give directions for assembling a piece of equipment or explaining how to*

work it, the writing is probably more helpful if it is straightforward and to the point. In the next paper, however, even though directions are being given, the voice is too impersonal--inappropriately so. There is "a limited sense of audience," and "little sense of writing to be read." There are problems with all the traits here, but audience awareness (i.e., Voice) is lacking also.

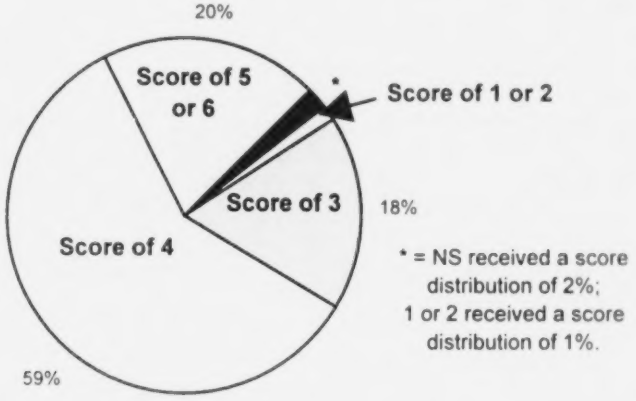
Get all necessary parts/accessories. Make sure you have all the parts, and get a manual to use when you are done building the system. Open up new case put motherboard in, screw the motherboard in place, connect all plugs/connections. Install the video card, Multi I/O card with serial, paralell and game parts, Install the IDE or SCSI Hard drive Controller (5), then fasten the cards in place with screws, plug all necessary cables to card, Install Floppy and Hard drives, hook H.D. to H.D. Controller (5) and floppy drive to a F.D. Controller (Most HD controllers have a F.D. controller built in), plug in power to all drives, double check everything, they your done. Put case cover back on, screw the screws in Place, plug in power card, monitor data cable, mouse, printer, all necessary cards, then turn accessories on, Monitor on, then computer on, if it boots up fine. You need to install DOS or Windows 95 if its not already installed. if you have any more problems, refer to the technical manual.

* * * * * * * * * *

Word Choice

In 1997, the average score for tenth graders on the trait of Word Choice was 4.0. Although students are not required to receive a minimum score to meet a CIM standard in the area of Word Choice, this trait is scored to provide additional information on students' writing. Overall, 79% of the scores received were a 4 or above, with 20% of the scores being a 5 or a 6. In order to observe trends in this scoring area over time, refer to the bar graph on page 10. The NS category on the pie chart below represents the papers that were not scorable. For an explanation of non-scorable papers, see pages 76-77.

Score Distribution at Grade 10: Word Choice, 1997


20%
Score of 5 or 6
*
Score of 1 or 2
Score of 3
18%
Score of 4
* = NS received a score distribution of 2%; 1 or 2 received a score distribution of 1%.
59%

Sample Papers

High (Score of 5): *The following paper by an 11th grader earned high scores for Word Choice. The writer employs a "broad range of words" that are accurate and specific and that definitely energize the writing. Occasionally, phrases border on being clichés ("etched into my memory forever," "shimmering water gushed across rocks," "my face widened into a grin"), but there are so many other fresh, vivid words and phrases that the writer earned a 5.*

The pungent aroma of sulfur filled my nose as I climbed out of the car. My family followed suit as I raced to the edge of a beautiful creek, deep in the woods of Yellowstone National Park. I wanted this beautiful sight to be etched into my memory forever. The geysers and springs were just too vile-smelling, but this, this was heavenly. I was seven years old then, but that creek is still imprinted on my mind, however, not for its beauty.

Winding a path through a forest of trees and plants, this creek was undoubtedly one of the best sights my family and I had seen on our vacation. As I stared at the crystal-clear shimmering water gushing across rocks, my face widened into a grin of pleasure. It was just like "Little House on the Prairie," and to a seven year old, that was far more thrilling than anything, especially since it was my dream to star on that show. Then, I saw a fallen tree, extending from the opposite bank of the river to the side on which I was standing. This log was identical to the one Laura Ingalls crossed each day to school on my favorite show. I took it as a chance to practice for what I knew would someday be my role.

Of course, when my mother saw my face, she was able to guess my intentions and she immediately told me I was not to cross the log. Well, I could not believe that she could even

think I was so uncoordinated I might fall in. Incensed at being doubted and feeling more than a little rebellious, I proceeded to step right on that log and make my way across. Again she warned me, however at this point I was almost to the other side and doing great. Once I reached the opposite bank, I turned with an 'I told you so' look on my face and began to go across once more. My luck didn't hold on the return trip. Stepping a little too confidently on a mossy growth, proved to be my error. My feet slid out from underneath my body and as I caught a glimpse of the sky tilted at a crazy angle, I knew I would rue the day I first watched "Little House on the Prairie."

Hanging on to the log with all my might, I screamed as the icy waters rushed by me, tugging at my grip on the log. Unable to swim, I screamed for help. None came, and it was at this point I knew I would die. The television had lied; Laura never fell in and I should not have either. I heard my mother call to me to stand up, then. What? Stand up? I couldn't let go of the log. Believing I would die either way and definitely not wishing to disobey my mother's advice once again, I stood. The water rose just about 3 inches above my knees.

I trudged to the shore, humiliation filling me with each step towards the ridiculing words of my sisters. I thought there would be refuge in my mother's kindness, but not after deliberately disobeying her. She simply said, "I told you so," and advised me to take off my soaking clothes.

My dream of starring in "Little House on the Prairie died in Yellowstone National Park. Never more would I believe what I saw on television and evermore would I remember the icy waters drenching my clothes as humiliation saturated my soul.

* * * * * * * * * *

High (Score of 5): *Even though a number of words and phrases in the following piece might be rather typical detective genre fare, they are nevertheless "precise" and "appropriate to audience and purpose." The writer uses a broad range of accurate, specific words that energize the writing.*

They were all there. Everyone present and accounted for. Dr. Ethwarp, the executor of the estate, nudged his half-glasses back into place and surveyed the room. He had never seen darker or more penetrating eyes in his life. His went from the eyes to the Jamaican cigar held between two rows of perfectly straight teeth. Considering who this man was, even smoking in this lavish room of G.P.'s elegant Chicago townhouse was not unexpected. The dress of this man, however, was anything but careless. He wore a dark pen-stripe suit, as was popular in the 1930's, an Italian made silk tie, as well as a dark overcoat and matching fedora, which were laid carefully on the couch. A perfect man with perfectly horrible intentions. After all, he was Carlo Morialty, the eldest son of the infamous and extremely dangerous Morialty crime family. His father sat in the overstuffed chair to Ethwarp's right. Ricardo Morialty was 87 years old, but he looked half that age. Ricardo's second born son sat on the couch, next to Carlo, with the third and final son standing in the back. Both, while not smoking, looked like their older brother and had the appearence of easily being able to do what thier reputation said they did. Ethwarp, while having only a little acquaintance with G.P. had over 33 million dollars locked up in his estates. Hard earned money from crooked buisneses and dishonest dealings. G.P. also had no living heirs to his estate, but had left instructions for the four heads to be at the reading of his will. Ethwarp was sure, although it could not be proved, that the Morialtys had completed many a dirty deed for G.P. However, no one had ever put away these two criminals; not even close. They had tried, of course, and all ended up in the same cemetery. No one, it seemed, could bust these operations. Nobody, that is, except for one man. One clever detective who was, in fact, only a couple weeks from tearing down G.P. That man was the sixth and final occupant of the room. Detective Tom Bellar sat to the right of Ethwarp in a light grey suit without uttering a sound while watching the scene with an unemotional gaze. Tom also knew why the Moriatys were there, although his own request presence was still a mystery to himself. So began the reading of the will of the late Gregory P. Hawthorne.

Dr. Ethwarp commenced the ceremony with the traditional welcomes and began to read the will. He read the request for the five to be present and went on to the part about the liquid 30 million dollars. The room became deathly quiet as the occupants strained to hear every word. Tom could feel his heart beating in his chest and was glad that Jill, his wife, was not at the gathering. The two had been through a lot together and Tom loved her dearly. He turned his attention beck to Ethwarp.

"Behind the portrait in this room, there is a time lock safe. Dr. Ethwarp has received and has, no doubt, followed my instructions to, on this day, place a letter in the safe, setting the timer to open in 1,008 hours, or precisely six weeks from today. This letter contains all nessicary information to access the liquid 30 million dollars of my estate. The 30 million dollars will be split, at the end of the six weeks, between six people of which five are present here. 5% of the money is willed to Ricardo Morialty, 5% is willed to each of Ricardo Morialtys three sons, 40% is willed to Tom Bellar, and the remaining 40% is willed to Jill Bellar. If any one of these six heirs are unable to, because of death, recieve their portion of the estate, their portion shall then divide evenly among the remaining heirs."

Tom's heart simply stopped. He grasped the chair handles till his knuckles were white as the reality of the event sank in. His death warrant had just been sign by the death of his enemy. Not only that, but his wifes too. The Morialty family had a chance to legaly obtain 30 mil. dollars. All they had to do was bump off Tom and Jill Bellar. $24,000,000 was certainly enough to make them try. So this was payback to Tom for all that he had done against G.P. As he licked his lips, Tom thought about the coming six weeks. The longest six weeks he might or might not live. His entire life was in that letter in the vault. How could that paper hold the key to such an awsome future? As the brothers left the room, he wondered if would live to find out.

* * * * * * * * * *

Mid-Range (Score of 4): *Although there are a couple of minor misuses of words in this paper, as well as several overused phrases and expressions ("trials and tribulations," "quaint little house," "spread my wings,") word choice for the most part is interesting and natural; ordinary, specific words are used effectively, and the language is definitely functional. (The Ideas and Content here are strong; most readers find themselves quite interested in this intriguing narrative.)*

Many people go out into the world thinking that they are able to adapt to society and move out on their own. This is a story about my best friend Emily and the trials and tribulations she encountered as she went out on her own to experience life.

Em, as we all called her, was never a book smart girl. Often she called herself stupid because she wasn't bringing home the same grades as the rest of her friends. Em was street smart. She could talk her way out of anything. It was that trait which, I believe, I most admired in her. Sure Em had a great personality, however, she was two years my senior yet she acted with a great irresponcability, as if she were two years younger than I.

Finally the day Em had awaited, through most of her life, had arived. Graduation day. The great excape from the drudgery we call High school. For there were no more Hall Moniters, there was no longer the fear of falling asleep during Physics and sleeping through lunch, and most of all there would be no more compairing of grades.

As we all get older, we have a need to expand our spirits and let ourselves run wild in the freedom of independence. Em's way of freedom came from moving out of her parents home, and she did just that. She found a quaint little house along the edge of a small forest. It was difficult for me, as an observer, to understand why Em's great escape was on the edge of the same forest we had played in during our childhood. I did not know then that under the facad, Em was a frightened little girl who didn't want to let go of familiar sights. Em the mighty, powerful, and strong was scared. She kept her prespectives close to home and family, the same things she wanted so hard to escape.

Many months passed and Em never was alone, although she felt she was. We as her friends felt her pain and tried to help her keep confedence in herself. However, we did not help enough. Em moved back in with her parents during the start of school. I will never forget the look of disappointment on her face as I helped her load the U-Hall. Before our journey back to town, Em looked me square in the eyes and said, "Lizzy, I love you like you were my sister. Promise me this, you will move out when you are ready." The crack in her voice and tears in her expressions told me she feared for me.

Now its almost time for me to spread my wings. But I will take my platform with me. Em and I are moving to Washington together in June. We know now that the road to independence is a lonely, dusty one full of memories. As we head down that road, we will pave it for one another with our love and friendship.

* * * * * * * * * *

Although most readers find the next piece moving (and it scored high in the traits of Ideas and Content, Organization, and Voice), it scored a 4 in Word Choice because "the writer employs a variety of words that are functional and appropriate to audience and purpose." The words work, although there are "rare experiments with language; however, the writing has some fine moments and generally avoids clichés."

On a cold winters day in Pine Falls, North Dakota, I was 12 year old. It is recess time. We are playing 4-square. The game is going well when the ball is accidentally knocked out of the playing square. The ball rolls into the playground. I run after the ball to retrieve it, but suddenly I feel myself falling. I see the ground, the swings, the slide, the sky and then blackness. I feel a great pain in my head. I have hit the ice. I hear voices saying "Are you O.K.? Amy? Get a teacher! Get help"! I hear but I cannot answer.

The voices begin to slowly fade and so does the pain. I feel as if I'm sleeping in my bed. It is so peaceful and quiet. I begin to experience a dream-within-a-dream.

I am dreaming that I am peering into the basement window of a house. It is cold and dark. I look around. There is a little girl in the corner. She looks so unhappy. She is curled up in a little ball crying and shivering. I try to help her, but the window is locked. All of a sudden I am inside.

I am floating through the air (like an Angel) above her. Then I begin to desend, falling willlessly down toward her. And apon impact I become the girl.

Now I am trapped. I'm cold and scared. I say "Please! Please! let me out!" No one answers. I begin to cry. I cry myself into a deep sleep and wake up in my own bed.

I hear faint voices getting louder and louder. I open my eyes. I'm not at home. I think to myself "Where am I? Who are these people? Why are they all standing around me?" They help me up and take me to the principal's office. My mother is contacted and I go home.

Three weeks later I found out I was an epileptic. And now I take medication for it. I returned to school to find I had lost most of my friends. They were afraid to be near me. To this day (6 years later) the majority of my old friends still are weary of being near me. Some still won't even speak to me.

I now attend school in Cedarbrook, Oregon and have many friends. Few no I am an epileptic, and those that do know, seem to accept it well.

Diseases are a battle all affected people hope to over-come. So treat others well. do not judge them by there wrongs or lessers (diseases / habits). They are people also, and wonderful ones at that.

* * * * * * * * * *

Mid-Range (Score of 3): *In the following paper, the "language is quite ordinary, lacking interest, precision, and variety. The writer does not employ a variety of words,*

producing a sort of 'generic' paper filled with familiar words and phrases... Attempts at colorful language seem overdone or forced,...with reliance on clichés and overused expressions."

As I lay on a grassy meadow watching the sun set. The cool nippy wind sends a chill down my back. The smell of roses and wild flowers surround me. With the grass beginning to moisten. Its starts to stick to my body.

Laying on my back as my eyes are wondering back and forth searching for a formation in the sky. The clouds are now a pinkish gray forming an illusion above me.

As my arm and hand reach for the sky. I want to touch and feel what is above me. If only my arms were long enough to touch the pinkish gray cloud formations above me. I would feel a comfort of soft fluffyness surround me.

The wind is now starting to pick up its spead. My body has goose bumps all over.

My body is now numb. But I know I have to get up and go home. The sun has now set. And once again I haven't felt the clouds that I love to watch change in shape and color that fasinate me so.

* * * * * * * * * *

Serious problems with Conventions may be the first thing to strike the reader of this next paper, but it misses the mark in Word Choice, too. "The language is quite ordinary, lacking interest, precision, and variety" (e.g., "kids," "stuff"). There are also a few places in which words are slightly misused (e.g., "up comming vocational school," "direction to what they want to do," "achieveing those classes," "an option to those kinds of carriers"). For the most part, the words work, but there are problems that cause the paper to fall short of a score of 4.

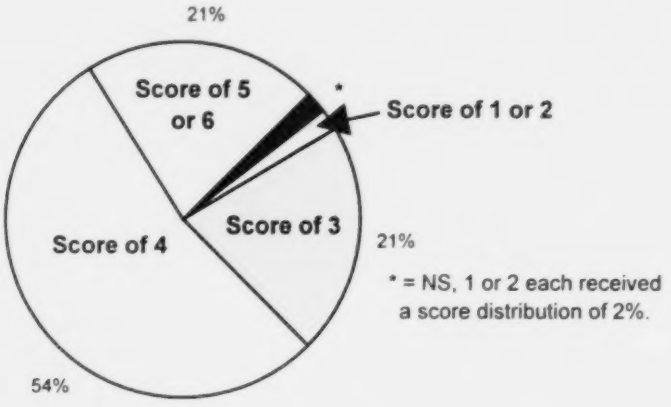
As a jounier I would like to see an up comming vocational school, for the up comming jouniers and seniours. I feel that we should be offered classes that we need to get us started through college. Kids should have some kind of direction to what they want to do in a job placement. Kids comming in foucused on there vocatinal goal and achieveing those classes for that goal. These schools should have an on the job training, it gives us a good sense of what they will be doing on that carrier that they may chose. These classes whould be very challenging for us, gives us a little option to these kinds of carriers. Classes that provide on the job training should also pay and offer insurance so that they can get a good experince instead of moving write in to the job and not having any sense of what kinds of stuff to do. This class alows us to get a very good hide start on life expically for teen moms that are going to struggle to get through college and High school. I feel that a job placement would keep alot of students in school then know. Students that achieve should be rewarded somehow. A job placement will not only educate these students but also help or make them become more independent upon are selfs. so we can learn how to make it on our own. Thats why I feel that they should look into help are kids prepare for everything they need too.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Sentence Fluency

In 1997, the average score for tenth graders on the trait of Sentence Fluency was 4.0. Overall, 75% of the scores received met the standard for the tenth grade benchmark (a 4 or above) with 21% of the scores being a 5 or a 6. In order to observe trends in this scoring area over time, refer to the bar graph on page 10. The NS category on the pie chart below represents the papers that were not scorable. For an explanation of non-scorable papers, see pages 76-77.

Score Distribution at Grade 10: Sentence Fluency, 1997



Sample Papers

Exceeds the Standard (Score of 5 or 6): *The following papers scored high in Sentence Fluency because the sentences have an "effective flow and rhythm." When read aloud, the first piece has "a natural, fluent sound; it glides along with one sentence flowing effortlessly into the next." Furthermore, there is "extensive variation in sentence structure, length, and beginnings that add interest to the text." Notice the combination of long, complex but graceful sentences with shorter ones (e.g., "I had power."). This paper exceeds the standards in all traits but Conventions because of some spelling problems.*

I don't know if it was a guy thing, testosterone, or just a basic "need for speed," but in the months following the earning of my driver's license, when I'd get behind the wheel I felt a small sense of invincibility. I was invisible to cops and omited from the laws of nature. I had power. This state of mind was maintained for about six months. That's when reality slaped me in the face.

My friends and I were going up snowboarding, and I drove as I did every weekend. Averaging about seventy-five to eighty miles an hour, I managed to cut the two to two and a half hour drive down to about one hour and twenty-five minutes, my personal record.

The snow glistened as the unusualy warm winter sun beat down from the cloudless sky above. Clear sky's, a foot of fresh powder, and we were all stoked. You couldn't ask for a better day.

As we reached the Timberline turn off, snow blanketed the pavement. Being equiped with studded tires and four-wheel-drive, the thought of ice didn't even cross my mind. That is untill about a half a mile from the Mt. Hood Medows juncture.

Cruising at a comfortable speed of sixty miles an hour on a snow packed road is not something I would suggest. As I neared the turn off I started veering toward the left. Thinking

nothing of it I slightly turned the wheel to redirect the car to my intended course. This action sent us into a ninty degree slide. Being fairly calm at this point I pulled out of the slide, only to be forced into another in the opposit direction.

The car at this time was filled with various reactions. From nervous laughter in the back seat, to just a blank stare from the front seat passanger.

At this time we were fish-tailing down this "winter wonder land" at about fifty miles an hour. Seeing my life pass before me, I franticaly grabbed the wheel, cranked it to the right, and then did the most moronic thing I could have done. I slammed on the brakes. This in turn sent us into a spin which only lasted a split second before it was abruptly stopped by a seven-foot snow bank / guardrail. Bouncing off the rail sent us into a series of slow spins which eventualy ended our progression down the road. The car then filled with alleviating laughter.

My feelings of invincibility were replaced with vulnerability. This joyous experience has made me more respectful of the priviledge of driving and halfway through this valuable lesson brought me closer to God.

* * * * * * * * * *

The next paper also exceeds the standard for Sentence Fluency with a strong 6 (as it does in every trait). It has the same characteristics regarding fluency as the previous paper, with an even stronger variety of sentence structures and lengths that please readers so much. The conversational tone of the piece, complete with natural-sounding asides, is very successfully executed; this writer demonstrates strong stylistic control.

I realize how upsetting it must have been, Miss Flora, to wake up and find a–weed–sprawled beside you; why, it would frighten anybody. But do calm down. That's the way. Try to see it from the weed's point of view for a moment. In fact, let me ask you a question: what is it about flowers that people love?

I'll tell you. It's the fact that they're so eager to be loved. They give freely of their beauty (you needn't blush), and they expect to be loved in return. But weeds, I assure you, want just as much to be loved. In the words of James R. Lowell, "A weed is no more than a flower in disguise."

Now, dear, don't be offended. You have always been beautiful, and so life has been easy for you. Weeds aren't so lucky. A long time ago, someone–somewhere–decided that weeds were ugly. Perhaps they were. But perhaps they were merely slow to display their inner beauty. In any case, can you imagine what such a stigma did to their self-esteem? They were devastated. To have struggled forth from the depths of the soil–straining upwards in an impulse of sheer faith–and finally to have burst forth into the sunlight–only to discover that they were undesirable, even vaguely repulsive, to the very society they sought... To be told that they were a blemish on God's creation, to be shunned by their fellows and uprooted from whatever corner of earth they tried meekly to occupy... Well, it must have hurt them very deeply.

Rather than express their pain, they attempted to disguise it. For some, their ill repute became a self-fulfilling prophecy, and they decided that if people thought they were ugly, then they might as well be ugly. Others, having been hurt once, developed an impenetrable armor of prickles to protect themselves. Still others, putting on a false show of bravado or determined to take whatever they could by force, invaded flower beds, thrusting themselves up amidst the brightness of their more fortunate–yet often heartless–cousins.

All of this, of course, increased people's dislike of them. A vicious cycle developed, with the people and flowers disliking the weeds (seeing only their surface), the weeds adopting self-defense mechanisms, and the people and flowers disliking them even more. But you see, Miss Flora–you have the power to break the cycle. You could be the one to stem (if you'll pardon the expression) the mutual animosity. It's quite simple: the next time a weed springs up near you, don't automatically turn up you petals at it or shudder and shy away. Take a good look at it. Try to see beneath its mask to the flower within–to the beauty that has yet to blossom, and its pent-up desire to love and be loved. Perhaps the very act of trying to understand it will transform it. As

Emerson once said, "What is a weed but a plant whose virtues have yet to be discovered?" What is a weed but a flower that has yet to be loved?

* * * * * * * * * *

Meets the Standard (Score of 4): *The next two papers meet the standard for fluency because the writing flows when read aloud. The first has a "natural sound; the reader can move easily through the piece, although it may lack a certain rhythm and grace." There are some repeated patterns of sentence structure and beginnings (i.e., the first and third sentences in paragraph three begin with "So..), but, for the most part, sentences have variety. A long sentence, also in paragraph three, contains a series that has not been written in parallel structure, and it causes some awkwardness in reading, but, overall, the piece reads fluently.*

I read my choices and the first thing that came to my mind when I saw Fanatic was the "Phili Fanatic". I don't know him personaly but have seen him at a baseball game and on T.V. To me he is the ultimate sport Fanatic especially baseball.

The Phili Fanatic is the mascot for the Philadelphia Philies profesional baseball team. He is approximately six and a half feet tall, green, and has a long round nose. The people of Philadelphia love him and all people that watch baseball or have seen him have grown to find him a great source of comic relief.

So what makes him such a fanatic of the Philies. It's what he does to the players the fans and everybody else he can get near. So if you haven't seen the Fanatic in action your probably wondering what he does, that makes him the Phili Fanatic. The things that I have seen him do are unbelieveable, while players are getting interviewed he will through pies in their face or spray them down with a gardon hose. During games he has shined a bald mans head, run across the feild in the middle of an inning, try to take pitches during warm up, go sit on the opposing teams bench, and stealing the players equipment when it is time for them to play. He also does acrobatics, not very well but he tries. I've seen him do cartwheels, fall off the top of the dug out and trip over second base. My favorite stunt of his is when he appeared at a Philidelphia 76'ers game and tried to slam dunk the ball off the back board, landing on the floor only to bounce back up and try again.

These are the things that have made him famouse, but what I feel puts him as the ultimate sports fanatic is his detication that he has to the Philies, and the town of Philidelphia. He is always going, even when it's the bottom of the ninth and their behind by 10. Above the rest he'll do anything to make a person laugh or to put a little humor in the game, even if it means making a complete fool of himself.

* * * * * * * * * *

The next paper also meets the standard for Sentence Fluency. The writing does flow, although connections between some phrases or sentences are less than fluid. Sentence patterns are somewhat varied.

Compared to my life, my grandfather, Edward Weir has had a rollercoaster of one. My grandfther grew up in the later stages of the depression and the post depressional years. He was born in his parents bedroom. The Weir ranch was 77 miles south east of a small town in Kansas. Edward was the fourth of five children. He'd have been the fifth, but his older brother died at birth. He has three older sisters and one younger brother. At the age of 13, Ed's father said that he'd had enough school, and that he was going to drop out and work the ranch. Ed wasn't happy about it, so he left home at 13 yrs. of age. He wanted to be a dentist. A dentist, according to his father, was not a real man's job, and if you didn't want to work the ranch, then leave.

Ed had saved enough money to buy a train ticket to San Francisco. When he arrived he had to sleep on the street for about two weeks before he found a place to stay. He found a place with an elderly woman named Midge. Midge was a widow who needed someone to do

maintenance around the house. So in trade she gave Ed hot meals and a roof over his head. He next enrolled himself in school and found an after school job, so he'd have some money. Although he was not at home he and his mother and siblings stayed in touch. His Father wanted notheing to do with him. A few years past and he recieved a letter, that his mother was very ill and would soon die. With that he hurredly bought a train ticket and was on his way home.

The day of his mothers funeral he returned home to California. While he was in Kansas, he met a girl, they communicated by mail for a while, she came to see him, they fell in love, and got married. From then on it's been wonderful, they've had two daughters and four grandsons.

My grandfather is 65 and self-employed. He is an ASE certified auto mechanic, licensed contractor, licensed building inspector, and an industrial welder. In my opinion he is one of the smartest and most versatile people I've ever met.

My life when set next to his doesn't look like a whole lot, but in a lot of ways we are very much alike. We are both very phusical and enjoy working with our hands, we enjoy hard wok and the benefits of good, hard work. I'm eager to learn what he knows, and he is eager to teach. We see eye to eye on a lot of important issues like religion, polotics, and what's happening around the world and in the United States. Although we have plenty in common, there are some things I cannot imagine. For instance, the depression, no food, no clothes, and not knowing when if or when it would end. It must have absolutely horrible and extremely trying on a young boy. He tells me about eating potatoes and salted pork in barrels, for every meal, 2 a day, for months on end. Or not having any food for 5 or 6 days. Stories about no clean clothes, toiletries, heat, or basic nessessities always make me wonder where he got his strength to go on and survive.

Edward M. Weir has lived through a great deal and has seen more than his share of pain and suffering. And yet he still has so much love to give. When I was younger I remember dreaming of growing up to be just like my grandpa, and if I'm lucky my dreams may come true.

* * * * * * * * * *

Does Not Meet the Standard (Score of 3): *Although the first paragraph of the following paper reads somewhat smoothly, the rest "tends to be mechanical rather than fluid." The second paragraph is quite choppy, with little variety of sentence beginnings (eight sentences in the rather brief piece begin with either "Then" or "So"). This paper also has problems with correctly punctuating sentences. Punctuation errors, however, would be scored in Conventions. These errors result in what appear to be sentence fragments. If the paper is read for a "sense of the sentence," it becomes clear that the error is not in creating sentence fragments—the error is in not knowing how to punctuate longer sentence structures.*

In a little town in Montana a kid Named Tim was running around with His friends. Then one day Tim went home and his parents told him that they were going to move to a town in Oregon. Tim asked, "What town are we going to". So his parent told him Oregontown. Tim's parents told him that they are going to move after School is out.

Then the next day Tim went to school. Tim told his friends that he was moving after school is out. His friends were sad. So Tim and his friends went to class. After class they went to there little Base they had Build. They talk for at least two and a half hours. Then Tim and his friends went home. Then in Two week Before school was out Tim's parents started packing. After the two week were over. They packed the stuff in the cars.

When they were driving Tim was thinking about what the new Kids would think of him. So when they got there. They unpacked al of the stuff. Tim said, "Where to live in a Home Not a traler." His parent said, "Yes". He was so happy that he had a Bigger room. Then he had Before.

* * * * * * * * * *

The following paper received a split score of 2/3. According to the scoring guide, descriptors for a 3 fit because "some passages invite fluid oral reading; however, others do not," and because there is "some variety of sentence structure, length, and beginnings, although the writer falls into repetitive sentence patterns." Descriptors from the 2 level that apply are that "the writing tends to be...rambling"...there are "a significant number of awkward...or rambling constructions."

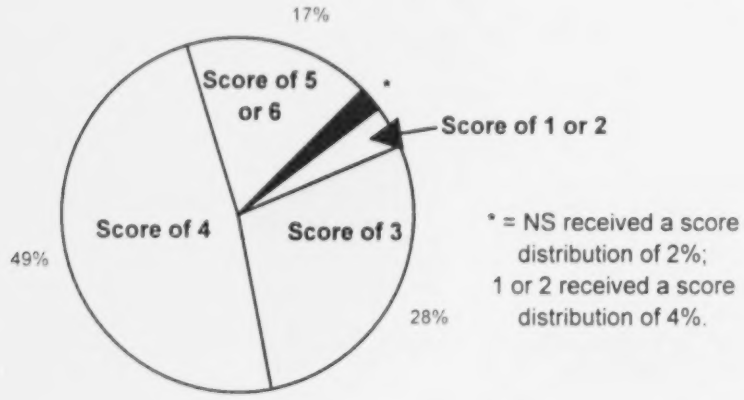
Once I was walking along the beach and along came a snake. It bit me 6 times on the bottom of my foot. And then all of a sudden the snake started talking to me! He told me that if I told anyone he bit me, he would turn me into a snake. So I didn't tell anyone he bit me, but then the next day I had a huge rash on the bottom of my foot! I tried putting lotion and creme on it but it just made it worse. So regardless of what the snake said I went to the doctor to have him look at it. He said he would give me some medication for it. Then he asked what kind of bite it was. And I said I think it was a snake. He said he thought it looked like an unusual looking snake bite. Well I used the medication he gave to me every night. 2 days later, my skin was turning into a snake! I was becoming a snake! Then the snake appeared out of nowhere and said I warned you not to tell anyone! And then he spit some gross mucas out of his mouth onto me and I vanished into the air!

* * * * * * * * * *

Conventions

In 1997, the average score for tenth graders on the trait of Conventions was 3.8. Overall, 66% of the scores received met the standard for the tenth grade benchmark (a 4 or above) with 17% of the scores being a 5 or a 6. In order to observe trends in this scoring area over time, refer to the bar graph on page 10. The NS category on the pie chart below represents the papers that were not scorable. For an explanation of non-scorable papers, see pages 76-77.

Score Distribution at Grade 10: Conventions, 1997


17%
Score of 5 or 6
*
Score of 1 or 2
Score of 4
Score of 3
49%
28%
* = NS received a score distribution of 2%; 1 or 2 received a score distribution of 4%.

Sample Papers

Exceeds the Standard (Score of 5): *The following papers earned scores of 5 because they demonstrate "skill in using a **wide range** of conventions in a sufficiently long and complex piece." The first one contains some internal dialogue, punctuated correctly, as well as several correct uses of semi-colons, hyphenated words, internal commas, and a question mark. Although the writer misspells some words ("sence" and "increadible," he spells several difficult words correctly ("descending," "adrenaline," "achievement"). A few more paragraph breaks might increase the effectiveness of the piece, but there is "little need for editing to polish the text for publishing."*

Students in high school choose a variety of ways in which to stay physically fit. Many choose to participate in organized sports, while others choose individual out-of-school sports or other ways to exercise. In the past, I have participated in football, basketball, baseball, and track. Today the only team oriented school sport I play is soccer, but there is nothing I would rather do than mountain bike.

Mountain biking is important to me for a number of reasons. First it is extremely physically demanding and requires me to be in excellent shape. Secondly, it requires me to overcome not only physical challenges, but mental obstacles. After succeeding I am rewarded with a great sence of accomplishment. Also mountain biking is a potentially dangerous sport where a rider can reach high speeds and have little protection from a crash. This gives me a small adrenaline rush, but I always feel that I have complete control. Finally mountain biking gives me a chance to be in nature and marvel over the beauty of the earth.

I believe that for a person to be strong, he should overcome obstacles on his own. Mountain biking is full of challenges to make a person more adamant. My favorite part of a ride

is descending, but to descend you must first climb. A steep, long climb is often as mentally demanding as it is physically. Often times while grinding up a mountain road or trail I ask myself, "Why am I doing this?" At the top I soon remember the answer to my question. The view is spectacular; I can see for miles in any direction. Most importantly though, I feel a magnificent sense of achievement. I accomplished a difficult task and not only did it strengthen my heart, lungs, and muscles physically; it gave me an improved self-confidence. I can say to myself, "Conquering this mountain was an increadible test of my endurance and capability. Not only did I reach my goal; I did it alone. If I can surmount an obstacle as great as this there is a chance that I can overcome obstacles in daily life as long as I work hard and persevere." This is a feeling of indescribable satisfaction.

After catching my breath and spending some time on top of the mountain, I take one last look and start the smooth, fast, and easy ride downhill. I can look forward to a shower, a meal, and another day of mountain biking in the near future.

* * * * * * * * * *

The next paper also earned a high score in Conventions, exceeding the standard. The writer employs a range of conventions "in a sufficiently long and complex piece;" it is impressive that she could sustain strong control over conventions in such a long piece. The writing is not flawless, but errors are minor and there is little need for editing. (There are a couple of sentence fragments, but they seem purposeful and are fairly effective. The most prevalent error is that several sentences begin with a coordinating conjunction, but given the current widespread use of this practice among published writers, coupled with the other strengths in conventions, it earned a score of 5.)

Attention all would-be smokers. I am addressing this to you to try to prevent you from forming the ugly habit of smoking. Yes, smoking is a habit. Some may claim they smoke only for pleasure and are not addicted, but let me assure you, they soon will be. Nicotine, a drug in cigarettes, is addictive. That is why nicotine patches work so well in breaking the habit of smoking–although users are not smoking, they are still getting the addictive substance which they crave. Do not think you are invulnerable to this addiction. You are not.

So you know that cigarettes, or more specifically the nicotine in them, are addictive. But why shouldn't you become addicted to them? Well, wouldn't you rather have control over your body than a substance? But if you need a reason, here's a good one. Lung cancer. As you know, cancers are often fatal or, if not, the damages from them can be permanent. Why would you want to take that risk? There is no "if" when it comes to getting lung cancer from cigarettes. If you smoke them long enough you will undoubtedly get lung cancer. Please don't think you will stop smoking before you get lung cancer. Cigarettes are addictive, remember?

There are other reasons than lung cancer why you shouldn't smoke that aren't as serious. For instance, smoking turns your teeth brown. It actually stains them. Also, smoking gives you bad breath. Have you ever talked to someone after thay had been smoking? I imagine their breath didn't smell too good. That's how yours will smell if you smoke.

Now, you may say you don't care about that. You may say you would only be hurting yourself. That is wrong. I'm sure you've heard of the term "second-hand smoke." When you breathe out smoke, someone else breathes it in. Thus, the same results would be given to them from second-hand smoke as would to a first-hand smoker, even if they had never smoked a cigarette in their life. So you would be affecting other people whether you want to or not. Also, you would be setting a bad example for people around you. Unless you don't smoke, of course.

If I have not convinced you yet, I will make one more attempt to show you the dangers of smoking by relating to you a true story. My friend's grandmother, "Betty," had smoked since she was a teenager. By the time she was 38, she wanted to quit, but was addicted to the nicotine she had smoked for more than 20 years. Trying every method–from counseling to cold turkey–she finally, after five years, was able to quit smoking completely. Then one day, after she had not had a cigarette in about three years, she met up with an old friend who came to visit. This

friend smoked, and offered Betty a cigarette. Thinking that one smoke would not hurt, she accepted. But one cigarette quickly turned into two, then five, and so one. By the end of the day she had revived her old habit.

At first she tried to hide it from her family. But then she developed a cancer in her lungs that soon spread to her throat. She went to her doctor complaining of pressure in her throat and the cancer was found. Surgery was performed, but not all of it was removed. The cancer soon affected her mouth as well, and this time it was beyond repair. Her nose and mouth were not longer functionable. A small hole had to be cut in her, through which she breathed and ate. Breathing through the hole made an unattractive whistling sound, and the tubes that she used to eat through her throat were ugly and embarrasing. Her whole life was changed from one cigarette. And all because she had a habit of smoking.

I urge you not to start smoking, and if you are already, please try to quit. Not only will you be affecting your own life, but through example you will affect many others. Please affect them positively. Don't smoke.

* * * * * * * * * *

Meets the Standard (Score of 4): *The following two papers demonstrate "control of conventions used, although a wide range is not demonstrated... Minor errors, while noticeable, do not impede readability." In the first, end-of-sentence punctuation is correct, although at times internal punctuation is incorrect, especially after introductory clauses, in the use of direct quotes, and in compound sentences. Spelling is correct for the most part, and capitalization and paragraph breaks are basically sound (although paragraphs are very short; breaks don't always occur in the most effective places).*

It was the beginning of basketball season my junior year and I was absolutely ecstatic. For the first two years of high school I had always dreamed of the day when I would be on varsity. To an underclassmen the glory of being a varsity player seemed overwhelming and I was convinced that my junior year would be the year I would shine.

Practices started and I worked as hard as ever, but as the weeks passed, I noticed myself becoming less agressive or almost feeling as though I didn't need to work as hard as I should. "I've got it made." I'd think to myself in a cool, confident way.

Finally, the day arrived when I was to have a meeting with coach about how I was doing, and that's when I had the rude awakening.

As I took a seat in front of coach, I had this deep down feeling that I was about to hear something I didn't want to hear.

"Well, Jill." Coach began. "You're a fine player and you have a really nice shot. I'm gonna start you out swinging J.V. and Varsity."

"No, this can't be!...He's joking, right?" I thought. It wasnt as if there was something wrong with playing J.V., but it just seemed like in that one instant all my goals had been thrown out the door. I had worked so hard...or had I?

As coach continued on about my "nice shot", those words, those failing words, reverberated in my mind. And I grew angry at no one but myself. Right there I realized I had not failed. My goals were still within reach. As I pretended to be listening to coach I swore to myself I was going to be on Varsity no matter what it took.

After weeks of hard work and a positive attitude, I achieved that goal. I was playing strictly Varsity after two games and I felt good about myself at having accomplished something I wanted.

When I think back on it now, I'm glad it happened. Being on Varsity was something that was important to me and something I very much took for granted. It made me work harder at becoming a better player and a better person.

* * * * * * * * * *

The following paper also meets the standard for Conventions. End-of-sentence punctuation is sound, but internal punctuation contains several errors (e.g., "These tests would then allow students, who wished to further challenge themselves, that opportunity."). There are a few spelling errors ("alltogether," "benificial"), a non-existent form of a word ("welcomely") and a common grammatical error in the misuse of "myself", but, overall, the piece is solid. It does not demonstrate much range, so it does not have even the potential of earning a score beyond a 4.

I am an advanced student at Oregontown High School. I would like to address the issue of challenge tests. I know that myself, and several of my peers, get frustrated when we are required to take such classes as health and personal finance. These classes cause us to eliminate other academic classes from our schedules. For many college bound students these classes are a waste and the time slots that they fill could be much better used.

To still meet state or district requirements for these classes, but allowing students to take more academically challenging classes, schools could develop tests showing that a student is proficient in an area of study. Then that student could move on to another level in the same area of study, or omit the required area alltogether. These tests would then allow students, who wished to further challenge themselves, that opportunity.

Challenge tests provide a simple solution to a common problem. They are currently used in schools all over Oregon and have proven themselves successful. They would meet requirements for graduation, but would allow students to proceed in furthering their academic courses. Challenge tests would be an extremely benificial addition to any high school, and would be welcomely accepted at Oregontown High School.

* * * * * * * * * *

Does Not Meet the Standard (Score of 3): *The next paper falls short of the standard score of 4. The writing here "demonstrates limited control of standard writing conventions...End-of-sentence punctuation is usually correct," although there are quite a few comma splices and two run-on sentences. Internal punctuation contains frequent errors. (A reader might argue that the faulty punctuation in this piece was meant stylistically to reflect the dazed mind of the narrator, but the writing assessment is not the place to be experimental with punctuation; the purpose of the assessment is to demonstrate control of standard conventions.)*

For days I had been traveling, moving on pointlessly into nothing. All that surrounded me was a vast desert and its emmense heat. With the temperature rising in the day I could only leave what little shelter I could find at night. My water was next to nothing, and dwindling away. If I was lucky it would last until the next night, and then I would surely die.

I awoke at sundown and helplessly walked and crawled onward, not noticing the buzzards circling above me. As dawn approached, I looked for shelter. I feared the heat of the oncomming day. I found a crack that offered some shade, made by three rocks piled on one another. Sweat perspired off of my face as the heat grew. It was impossible to sleep.

When the sun was over the horizon I moved once more, I had no direction, for my mind wandered helplessly. Once I saw a lake glimering in the night but I could never quite reach it, somehow it kept moving farther and farther away. My boots where shredded from walking on lava rock, my feet were blistered, what clothes I had were shredded. If only I could toss them I would but then the scorching rayes of the sun would destroy me, scorching my body.

How long I had been without water I do not know all time was lost. My lips were cracked, my skin burnt and peeling. My mind was like a zomby, where was I? My body ached with pain, it was difficult to move. Soon I hoped it would end, soon.

By morning I could not move, my body stiff, the pain subsiding. I tried to get up but couldn't, I tried to crawl but couldn't. After several minutes of struggling I managed to roll over on my back. The last thing I saw was the buzzards, circling above. They had waited long enough and now they had finally got me. I got a smile on my face and said "Its finally over."

I awoke with a sudden jolt, dripping with sweat, my sheets were soaked. I climbed out of bed and went to the water faucet and got a drink of ice cold water, and watched the sun come over the mountains.

* * * * * * * * * *

The following paper earned a split score of 2/3. There is some control over basic conventions in that end-of-sentence punctuation is correct more often than it is not, and the spelling is fairly sound (except for "board," "appilcation," and "their"). However, there are some end-of-sentence punctuation errors, internal punctuation, capitalization errors, and paragraphs that begin in ineffective places.

I think jobs after School are a good idea. It is good for, for a few reasons.

My first reason is it keeps teens out of trouble, they are doing something good instead of messing around after school.

My second reason is if they had job they would not sit around the house all the time being tired and board.

You might be asking. How hard is it to get a job?

From experience I know. At the moment I work at the 18 wheeler truckstop. All I had to do was put in an appilcation, and then I got a call asking me when I could start.

My third reason is that teens need money too. They just can't sit at home all thier lives and bum off Mom, and Dad. What if they want a car or truck?

If they have a job then they have money for it.

* * * * * * * * * *

Does Not Meet the Standard (Split Score of 1/2): *The following paper earned a split score of 1/2 because it "demonstrates little control of standard writing conventions. Errors are significant and frequent, including misspelling of common words that distract the reader, some end-of-sentence punctuation errors, internal punctuation errors, and capitalization that is inconsistent or often incorrect." This paper would require substantial editing. It is not an example of a straight 1 paper, however, because at the 1 level, "the severity and frequency of errors are so overwhelming that the reader finds it difficult to focus on the message and must reread for meaning;" the spelling errors here are phonetic, for the most part (e.g., "wated," "thay," "uncal"), and the punctuation, when it's there, helps the reader. The reader does not have to reread the passage in order to understand it.*

I wated for along Time To learn how To Ride a hourse. I tride To get help when thay were using the hourses but thay never had time and when Thay did I dident.

when I chouldent Get help I got promeshen to use my uncals hourse and saddle. I went to the barn and got the hourse Ready and Taught myself how to ride and now I Ride as often as I can

it took me awill and it talt me more Then how to ride a hourse.

* * * * * * * * * *

Beyond the Six-point Scale:

The six-point scale is only a partial indicator and descriptor of what we all know our students can do. During training for teachers and raters, the scale is represented on a diagonal line with an arrow at the top, indicating that some students write above and beyond those descriptors. Some of our students are truly gifted writers, and occasionally during the assessment, at every site, pieces come along that take our breath away. They are reminders of

the potential of all of our young people, and reaffirm for us the joy of working with them. Following are two such pieces.

My father had a song for every occasion. Singing came like breathing to him and his voice was clear and sweet. When he sang on the street passerbys shook their heads and muttered that Scott Haywood was wasting his time and should get himself into a show somewhere. Papa had always wanted to perform in a real show. He used to tell me about his plans to pack up and leave for California. "California," he said, "is where you get discovered." But he met Mama and soon I came along. He named me Mattie after a girl in his favorite song. It's called "Once in a Blue Moon."

"Once in blue moon you find love that's true.
When I found sweet Mattie, 'twas then that I knew.
Not only the moon, but the stars were all blue."

Papa sang about everything you could imagine. Songs of the way the moon danced over the ocean, songs of Roman Cathedrals, and Paris in the summer time. Ironically, he had never even seen the ocean, much less traveled to a foreign country. I was proud of my Papa. I loved him with a fierceness. I think Mama was proud of him too. When he sang her face became soft, and sometimes, just for a moment, the lines above her eyebrows and at the corners of her mouth slackened, and she was young and pretty like the wedding picture on the mantle. I loved that picture. Papa was dipping Mama and singing to her. His curly yellow hair spread above his head, catching the sun like a halo. Mama was looking up at him with a smile that seemed to stretch her whole face. When they fought I used to run my fingers over that picture longing for things to be like they must have been then.

I think that deep down I always knew that he would go. One night after a long fight I lay in bed listening for a sound downstairs, and then it came–the sound of the front door closing. I put on my jacket and my boots, and slipping out the door, followed his footsteps in the snow. Ahead of me I could hear his strong voice against the wind.

She died of a fever, sweet Mattie, at noon.
And that's how I lost my blue moon, blue moon.
And that's how I lost my blue moon.

It was the last verse, and I had never heard him sing it. I had only seen it written in his brown leather song book. I stumbled and he stopped and turned. He did not seem surprised to see me. We stood side by side, hands in our pockets, breathing frost into the air.

"You knew all week, didn't you?"

I nodded dumbly. He chuckled. "Can't fool my baby girl."

He turned and gazed at the horizon. "See that line out there? That's where California starts. I think I'll go for a walk."

"No." My throat was tight, and I couldn't tell if I had gotten the word out. He took his hands from his pockets and with long graceful strides started away. Numbly I watched him go. After a few yards he turned and waved to me, one hand making a slow circle against the gray sky. I could have said anything to him. "Don't leave. or "I love you." Instead I called after him, my voice cracking on every syllable, "Be sure and write."

The last thing I heard, long after I lost sight of him was his laugh splitting the cold air.

* * * * * * * * * *

"It's three A.M., do you know where your heart is? This is the Trumpet Man, bringing reality to your radios. I know you're listening. I know it hurts. Give me a call. Stop by. The light is on in this musical Motel Six. All it takes to get rid of the hurt is to phone in the pain. I'll take all of the love, heartache, lonliness, and feeling you give me, and play it out over the airwaves. Then you won't have it any more. Don't be shy. You need to tell me the storm that's in you, and let the truth rain out. Through my horn I'll heal you...Hello, heartache. You're on the air."

I took a breath and a sip of Midnight Java. A breeze of my fingers and the third line was open, connecting me with a lonely night owl seeking my aide.

"Trumpet Man?" an achey, tentative voice.

"Yes, this is the Trumpet Man."

"Oh, Trumpet Man, I'm hurting." His composure was a dam, holding back the river of his emotion.

"Well, all right now. We're gettin' somewhere." My voice was steady, shure. "You love her, don't you?"

"Yes." Surprise in his voice. "How did you know it was–"

"I know, baby. That's what I'm here for."

I switched to my headset and eased back, proping my feet up. My chair didn't squeak.

"But it's worse than that ordinary love. See, Trumpet Man, she loves me. She cares for me. Deep." Leaning to the switch board, I adjusted a static dial. Lightly, I stole my horn and a polishing rag from their case, and snuck them to my lip.

"What's your pain?" I mouthed his answer as he spoke it:

"I'm in love with her." Then, his dam broke.

"Truly, Deeply, Madly, Painfully. I can't breath when she's in the room I cry for her. Oh, Trumpet Man, I'm not the one to let my grieving show. I keep my pain to myself. But I feel so alone without her. I'm a candle without wax."

A grin floated through my lips at his heartfelt analogy. I teased the valves through their scales. My secret, silent warmup. He continued.

"I'm afraid to get close and scare her away with the power of my emotions, so I distance myself. I've created a rift between us that is the very thing I was so frightened of creating. I've had the blues, but Trumpet Man, these are deep aqua and navy and cornflower blues. I've never seen jeans bluer than these. The sea's color can't compete with this ache, but perhaps its depth comes close. Oh, what can I do?"

His words floated in. Aware of love. Hard times are as close as your skin, and when you find them, it does hurt. I sat up.

"Does she know?"

"Come on, Trump. It's written on my face. I mean, you knew before I told you." A pause. I cocked my eyebrow at the switchboard. "Of course she knows."

No weekend lover here. No crush. No fake. This man was as pure as love gets. He was at the root of love...Pain.

I stood, and raising my golden gun told him what his heart had told me. I played, not for him alone, but for all of you. You, in love or out who know that the words to the old French folk song ring truer than bells of liberty:

> The joy of love
> Is but a moment long
> The pain of love
> Lasts your whole life long.

I stopped, leaking sweat. The switchboard was quiet. I shut down the line and returned to my mike.

"It's four A.M., do you know where your pain is? It's the Trumpet Man again, bringing courage to your car stereo. I know you are there. It won't be long 'fore someone cares. In fact, here I am. Give me a ring. Stop by. We'll talk. The only way out, is through. Relax, don't fight it. Just depend on my golden gondola to ferry you to peace.

"Good evening sorrow, You're on the air..."

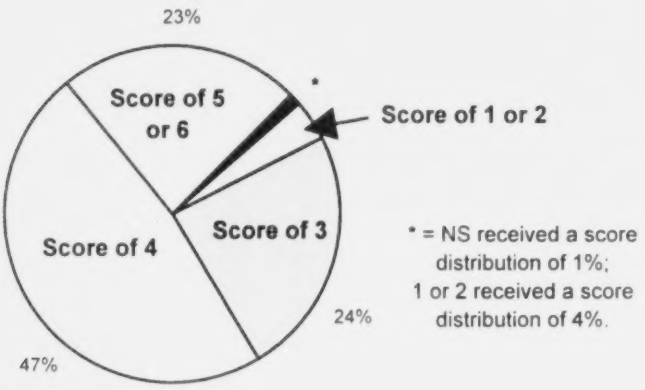
* * * * * * * * * *

Grade 8

Ideas and Content

In 1997, the average score for eighth graders on the trait of Ideas and Content was 3.9. Overall, 70% of the scores received met the standard for the eighth grade benchmark (a 4 or above) with 23 % of the scores being a 5 or a 6. In order to observe trends in this scoring area over time, refer to the bar graph on page 10. The NS category on the pie chart below represents the papers that were determined not scorable. For an explanation of non-scorable papers, see pages 76-77.

Score Distribution at Grade 8: Ideas and Content, 1997


23%
Score of 5 or 6
*
Score of 1 or 2
Score of 3
Score of 4
* = NS received a score distribution of 1%; 1 or 2 received a score distribution of 4%.
24%
47%

Sample Papers

Exceeds the Standard (Score of 5 or 6): *The following two papers both scored above the standard in Ideas and Content. In the first piece, the writer responds to a prompt about describing your "territory" or place that makes you feel alive. Her writing is "clear, focused, and interesting;" this writer is in control as she chooses details that are "well-suited to audience and purpose," and she shares insights that go beyond a mere physical description of her dance studio.*

Whenever I feel pressured and I need breathing room, I have dance as my outlet for stress. I dance in a small studio that used to be a garage. Later, however, it was converted into a tiny building that has been expanded to the point that there are two studios, a dressing room, two restrooms, two viewing rooms, and an office. The small studio is much more cozy than the large studio, but soon turns into a sweltering oven after only minutes of dancing. Both studios have one-way mirrors so observers can view the dancers, but at the same time not distracting them. With creaky floorboards, thin walls, and trophies sitting on the rickety shelves, you get the idea that the owners put more emphasis on dancing than on the outward appearance. The office is a cozy little room with a large, shaky window facing the road. Against the window is an L-shaped desk with a wall behind it lined with shelves of dance shoes. For the most part, it is not exactly the Hilton, but then what dance studio is?

However run-down it may appear to be, it will always seem like a second home to me. It is a place to vent my energy and forget my frustrations. On the dance floor, I can take off my

mask and feel free to be me. It is there that I am motivated to do my best and not be discouraged by my mistakes, because I find it in myself to pick up and try again. With every pirouette, every grande jete, I push myself a little harder; to perfect a slight something. So by the end of class, I am exausted, not to mention completely drenched. None of this matters, however, at the end when I am filled with the satisfying feeling of accomplishment. I know for a fact that I am benifiting greatly from dancing, and when I think back on childhood memories, I know for a fact that I won't forget the spectacular feeling I get while on the dance floor, in that little studio that used to be a garage.

* * * * * * * * * *

The piece that follows scored higher than the standard because it is "exceptionally interesting...It holds the reader's attention throughout, and main ideas...are developed by...rich details." The writer took a very unusual and creative approach to an imaginative prompt that asked students to tell a story from the point of view of an inanimate object. The paper scored a 5 rather than a 6, however, because it could be developed further.

My name is Richard Shanary. Over the years though, people have just called me Dictionary. I live on the top shelf of the local library with the references. I am teased a lot by the other books because of my obesity and my lack of a plot within my pages. I really don't have any friends besides Brea Tannica and her family. This is because everyone says I'm boring because I always just state facts and have no real opinions of my own.

The day that changed it all started off like any other day, me getting teased as people took me off the shelf, flipped through my pages, and set me back in my spot. They always just looked at me, they never checked me out like the other books. I used to wonder why until I saw that sign that said: No Checking Out References–Encyclopedia, Dictionary. That's not right. I'm no reference. I'm a story, a good story, that's why I'm the most looked at book in the library. But then I relized it. I have no more plot than Brea and her family, and they are references. I may not have fantasy like the fictions, or drama like the non-fictions, but I have facts.

In a frantic, I told the other books. They decided not to tease me any more, because fantasy and drama are great, but no one should be foolish enough to forget the facts, or the book who makes it possible to spell i-n-t-e-l-l-i-g-e-n-t-l-y.

* * * * * * * * * *

Meets the Standard (Score of 4): *Both pieces that follow meet the required standard for Ideas and Content. The first one describes a "special place," and the writer does so in a way that is vivid and clear. The descriptive details she provides are focused and relevant; the reader has clear images not only of what this place looks like, but also of what the author does there and how she feels while she's there.*

Some people have a special place where they can just go to unwinde and let not a thing in the world bother them.

I have a special place near the back of our property that is about one and a half miles away from everyone and everything. I ride my horse back there and just sit under the big old pines and dream for hours at a time.

The pine tree stands about 30 to 40 feet high and is covered in pine cones. It sits up high on a ridge. The ridge looks as if somebody flattened the top of it with a level, and let the rest just role on down. Directly in front of my tree sits a huge sand pit that is a blast to run my horse through. In the summer I can find all sorts of lizards, that I could play with for hours on end. A little ways to the south of my trees, there is a gigantic pond that is way over my horses head, so some weekends my best freind, my horse, and I all go swimming. One of us will hold on to his tail and the other one will drag the person. After that we will go sit under the pine trees and dream about our boyfriends, school, horses, friends, etc.

I love that little shady spot under my trees, and I'm sure it loves all the crazy dreams that have been thought of under it.

* * * * * * * * * *

The piece that follows also meets the standard for Ideas and Content. The writer has chosen to write a short piece in the imaginative mode that is very focused and controlled; the details are relevant to developing the story about an injustice, and the reader can easily understand the main ideas and point of the story.

"Well your honor, as you can see my statement explains exactly what had happened on the night in question," exclaimed Mr. Castle to Judge Richardson.

"Yes, I know, but we would like you to explain it again," said Judge Richardson.

"Okay...I was just finishing work at the factory. I punched out and started towards my truck. When I got to my truck I set down my briefcase and reached into my pocket and grabbed my keys. Just as I put the key in the door I began to hear a growl and barking directly behind me. There in the back of my bosses truck was the biggest, ugliest pittbull I have ever seen in my life. I don't know what set him off but that mutt jumped out of the back of the truck and onto my back. The dog had ahold of my wrist and he was chawing at my chest. I tried to shake him off but his teeth were in deep. I'm lucky the security gaurd came when he did."

"Later, after a visit to the hospital I told my boss I was going to try and get that dog put to sleep. That's when he fired me. He said that if I pressed charges I would lose my job. Then I decided to take him to a higher court. First I get attacked by some crazed mutt then I lose my job. If that's not "Injustice" I don't know what is!"

Mr. Castle went on to win the court battle. He got money for lost wages, hospital bill, and for exess stress. The dog was put to sleep as well.

* * * * * * * * * *

Does Not Meet the Standard (Score of 2 or 3): *Neither of the following two papers meets the standard. In the first paper, "the reader can understand the main ideas," although they are "overly broad or simplistic, and the results are not effective...Supporting detail is limited, insubstantial, and overly general." The writer seems to have difficulties "when moving from general observations to specifics." Some examples would help.*

Many kids or teenagers want more freedom these days. Depending on the way the parents feel is if he or she gets what they desire.

Parents usually don't give the freedom to them because when they were our age their parents were really strict on them and they didn't get to go out or do that much.

For example even our grandparents put the guilt trip on us. They do that by saying that they had to walk 5 miles in the snow to get to school or get up at 4:00 in the morning and chop wood.

Also we want more freedom because parents worry to much and they don't realize how responsible we are but when it comes to decisions we know what to do. Parents should trust us on the decision that we make.

Another reason that parents might not let their kids do alot of things is because they might think that they will do something bad if they had done something bad before. For example if the kid steals once then the parents feel that they will do it again. The kid would surely of learned their lesson the first time they wouldn't do it again. That is how I feel about more freedom from parents.

* * * * * * * * * *

The following paper also falls quite short of the standard for Ideas and Content with a split score of 2/3. In this case, the reader can understand the main idea, although sometimes it's difficult to see where the piece is going because of all the "irrelevant details that clutter the text." Developmental details are "somewhat off-topic." Organization is a problem here also, but that's not the only reason the piece is difficult to follow. It lacks the focus and control that characterize pieces that meet the standard for Ideas and Content.

It was thanksgiving and we had our family come over to eat turkey. The turkey was great, everyone was having a good time. It was about 6:00 and everyone was leaving. By 6:30 everyone was gone.

We got a phone call, it was Christie, Lori's mom. She needed my older sister to babysit Lori and Bobby because their next door neighbor Elaine had a stroke. Brad and Christie wanted to go to the hospital to see her. Barb wanted Lori and Bobby to come to our house instead, so they did.

The next morning we all went to town. We stopped at B.R. auto parts where Lori and Bobbys mom and dad work to see when they needed to be home. They didn't need to go home so we went to town to have some fun. About 5:00 we brought them home.

The next day was a school day. We got home and called Lori. She found out that Elaine wasnt doing well, they had to fly her up to Portland to do surgery on her.

A couple days later she was getting better and after a couple more days she was back home in bed. Her daughter flew from Ohio to see her. A week later we found out that Elaine was going to move to Ohio with her family. Before she moved we brought her a card and some cinnamon rolls. We told her we would miss her and hope she would get better. After that we never saw her again. When we all went home we felt good about are selfs.

Lori and Bobby write Elaine letters but she hasnt responded, so we all hope she will because I know I would like to here from her.

* * * * * * * * * *

Does Not Meet the Standard (Score of 2): *This piece falls very short of the standard because the main ideas are actually "unclear," and "development is attempted but minimal." The main ideas "require extensive inferences by the reader;" we are not really sure what causes the events in this story to occur.*

On day when I got home frome school I saw a letter on the coffey table.

If I only would have read that letter a day sooner I would have 100 dollars in my pocket My mom came home and asked why I didn't go to the bank. Since I didn't go to the bank my mom got all the money.

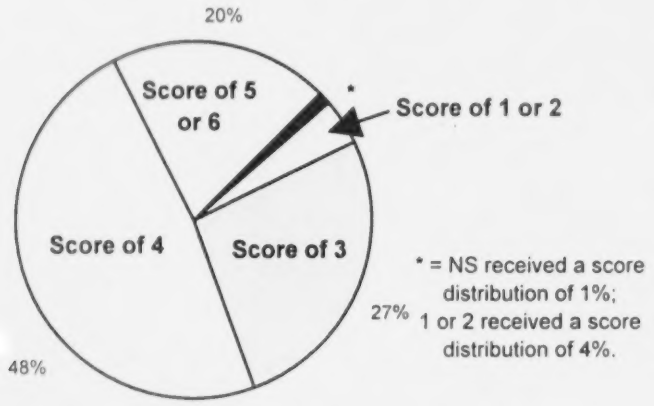
I was kinda mad at myself because I didn't read the letter.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Organization

In 1997, the average score for eighth graders on the trait of Organization was 3.9. Overall, 68% of the scores received met the standard for the eighth grade benchmark (a 4 or above) with 20% of the scores being a 5 or a 6. In order to observe trends in this scoring area over time, refer to the bar graph on page 10. The NS category on the pie chart below represents the papers that were not scorable. For an explanation of non-scorable papers, see pages 76-77.

Score Distribution at Grade 8: Organization, 1997


20%
Score of 5 or 6
*
Score of 1 or 2
Score of 4
Score of 3
* = NS received a score distribution of 1%; 1 or 2 received a score distribution of 4%.
27%
48%

Sample Papers

Exceeds the Standard (Score of 5 or 6): *The two papers that follow exceed the standard for Organization. The first has a subtle, developed beginning and a graceful, developed sense of resolution. Sequencing is effective, and transitions among all elements are smooth.*

Have you ever helped someone in need? If you have you'll know it makes you feel really good inside. It puts a diferent light on helping people. I know how this is because I helped a person in need one time, and not only did it make me feel good, it gave me a new friend.

There was this old lady that lived across the street from me. I thought she must be very lonely because her husband had passed away and she was living all alone. When I came home from school I would see her on hands and knees digging weeks out of her garden. Then she would load up a heavy wheelbarrow and haul the weeds into a pile. I used to think to myself, 'I wonder if she could use some help?' But I would always dismiss the thought and go play.

One day when I got off the school bus I saw her walking down her steep driveway to get the newspaper. Without even realizing I picked up the paper and ran over to give it to her. When I handed her the paper I felt kinda funny, until I saw how grateful she was. She was so thankful that she said if I did this every day that she would give me something in return. So as the days went on I continued to get her paper and occasionally help her in her garden. I did get a treat. She gave me fresh baked chocolate chip cookies.

The day came when we were spending a lot of time together. We weeded the garden, burned brush, and washed windows. This is how my neighbor, Mrs. Snow and I became close friends. Even though Mrs. Snow has moved to a rest home now it still gives me a warm feeling

to think back and realize that just by going a little bit out of my way to help my neighbor, that it brought us to be very close friends.

* * * * * * * * * *

The piece that follows covers specific incidents in the lives of two people from the time they met in eighth grade until they are 94 years old; despite a few leaps in time, the reader can easily follow the sequence of events. The beginning is inviting, and there is a developed sense of resolution.

That year will always be burned deep in my memory. It was the year I was in eighth grade. Mom, dad and I lived in a small, rundown house, on a failing farm, outside of a tiny town in Indiana. Dad probably would have been a successful farmer if he had better equipment. But as it was the farm was far from prosperous. I think that's what caused most of the friction between Mom and Dad. It seemed that there was never a moment that they weren't fighting. Needless to say, that year I was very emotionally unstable. My self-esteem had never been so low; and neither had my grades.

Every morning on the bus I would sit and watch the great shining face rising from his bed beyond the horizon. It was easy for him to keep burning. He didn't have parents who yelled all the time, kids at school who made fun of him, or grades, like I had. The sun was the only thing still shinned in my life.

One day, about the middle of the year a voice broke into my thoughts of self pity.

"Can I sit here?" The voice had come from a boy whom I had never met. The next day and every day after that we spent the bus ride to and from school talking, encouraging, and listening to each other. Richard Robertson soon became my best friend. He made me realize that I was special, not only to him but to the world I lived in.

The next semester my grades had improved tremendously. Mom and Dad finally got a divorse but thanks to Richard I lived through it. I don't know where I would be without him.

"Rebecca, I'm home." Richard's voice breaks into my memories of yesteryear. "You should go outside and see the snowman those kids built. It wouldn't be much colder than it is in here. Look at the fire it's nothing but coals and embers."

"Coals and embers." I repeated, turning it over in my mind.

"Did you say something, honey?" Richard asks while putting a log on the fire.

"I was remembering when we first met, when you rekindled my fire for life. You put on logs of self respect and confidence, and then stayed by my side to make sure I kept going. Over the years there have been many times when you've had to add more wood and stir my fire, but you were allways there ready to do it. Thanks so much Richard."

"You are so welcome, Rebecca," Richard said placing a tender kiss on the lips of his wife, the mother of his three children, and his best friend.

Rebecca Robertson lived to be 94 years old. She had three children, 7 grandchildren, and 4 great grandchildren. Her and her husband Richard Roberson, were loved by all who knew them because of their positive and encouraging attitudes and lifestyles. This positive way of life was passed on to their children, and childrens children.

* * * * * * * * * *

Meets the Standard (Score of 4): *The following two papers meet the standard for Organization. In the first piece, the structure is coherent, with clear sequencing. The writer provides some background before he gets into the narrative itself, with a "recognizable, developed beginning that may not be particularly inviting." The conclusion, too, is developed sufficiently to meet the standard, and the body is "easy to follow."*

Robert was a normal teenager. He had friends, played sports and did everything normal teenagers do. He lived in Chicago with his mom. Occasionally he traveled to be with his father in Boston. His parents were divorced. Robert had a good life, but he especially enjoyed his trips to his grandfathers cabin in Tall Pines, New Mexico. His grandfather was tall, pleasantly plump, with grey hair, a bushy mustache, and eyes that sparkled like newly polished emeralds. He was a caring man. He loved all kinds of animals. Robert and his grandfather were regulars at the local zoo near by.

Tall Pines was a small town with not many people. It was mostly forest. Robert's grandfather lived right in the middle of it. His cabin was beautiful. It was surrounded with flowers. Ivy leaves crawled up the side of the cabin. There was a small brook nearby that was teeming with fish. Robert arrived with his dog RB at 7:30 am. It took 45 minutes to get to the cabin. He actually enjoyed the ride through town.

On his first day there he and his grandfather went fishing in the brook. His grandfather always seemed to have the magic touch. In the first hour he had caught four fish. All went well until they heard a rifle shot. RB was off in a flash, with Robert and his grandfather close behind. When they got there, they found a female deer with a bullet in her chest. Robert, on the brink of tears, asked what they could do. Grandfather said the best thing to do is not to let her suffer. Just as he was about to get up to get his gun, the deer's stomache moved, and moved again. The deer was pregnant. Without thinking, grandfather took his knife and slit open the mothers abdomen and pulled out the baby. He began to clean it up.

It was a miracle to Robert and his grandfather that the baby had survived and was well. The baby deer was the coals and embers of his mother. Robert remembered these moments long after his grandfather had passed away. The times he had spent in Tall Pines were the best times of his life, all thanks to his grandfather.

* * * * * * * * * *

The next paper also meets the standard for Organization (barely) with a low 4. In this piece, the introduction is recognizable but formulaic ("...this is how I learned it..."). There is clear sequencing, but transitions are sometimes "stilted or formulaic" ("First," "Second"); at other times they are smoother ("Once you've got those down"), although a slight variation of that particular transition is used three times. The conclusion is present but undeveloped, which is characteristic of the 3 score point.

Something I'm good at is cheerleading. It didn't take me very long to learn everything I possibly could, but this is how I learned it.

First you've got to start out with the basic stuff like how to do kicks, jumps, and arm motions. You've got to make sure your kicks and jumps are precise and you know them well enough to do in front of a crowd. Then you've got to make sure your arm movements are stiff, but not to stiff so your arms don't look like boards. Once you've got those down all you need to do is keep practicing them until you get even better.

Second you've got to learn the cheers and get to know your fellow cheerleaders. When your learning the cheers make sure your movements are pretty much the same. Go over your cheers a couple of times each day. Once you've got your cheers down and you and all the other cheerleaders trust each other to put each other up into stunt, then you can learn the simple ones like the pony sit, quel sit, shoulder sit, and the double knee sit. After you've got those down you can on to bigger and better stunts.

Some other things that make me a good cheerleader is I smile a lot and have a good attitude if our team wins or loses.

After I learned everything I possible could about this sport, I just kept on practicing so I can keep on improving.

* * * * * * * * * *

Does Not Meet the Standard (Score of 3): *Although the reader can follow the gist of the following story, the overall organizational structure is "skeletal." A beginning and an ending do exist, but they need to be more developed in order to meet the standard.*

The last time I helped someone and felt good about it was when I was at Rosewood. This old lady wanted me to hold the elevator doors for her because she has a walker. I have never seen someone in my life move so fast with one of those walkers before. On our way up to the second floor she asked me if I thought she looked 96 years old I told her no because I didn't want her to think she looked really old. After she said that and I said no she said, "That's wright I am 93 years old." I told her that she moves around really good for her age. Then she patted me on the shoulder and told me that I am a real sweetheart. I said thank you. When I got to my Grandpa's apartment she followed me in and she was telling my mom and me about herself when she was my age and what It was like growing up. I thought that she was interesting and I hope that I meet her again in the elevator.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Does Not Meet the Standard (Score of 2/3): *The following paper falls short of the standard for Organization because it has an undeveloped beginning, no sense of ending or closure, a lack of transitions between paragraphs, and few transitions between sentences within paragraphs. Some effort has been made to group related ideas into the same paragraphs.*

Some important things just off the top of my head about the 90's would be the O.J. Simpson trial. It was called the trial of the century. It had a big affect on some people because that's all they did was watch the O.J. trial. Also it seems like everyone watched the verdict at ten in the morning and after the not guilty verdict everyone was talking about it.

In the 90's we were just getting into major technological break throughs, unfortunatly none come to mind at this instant except that I know they used computers to add breath taking special affects. Examples of these movies would be Casper, Mighty Morphin Power Rangers, Jurassic Park and lets not forget Mortal Kombat.

A couple bad things that happened in the 90's would be the L.A. Riots, caused by (I think) the not guilty verdict of the cops who beat Rodney King. Also the spread of gangs and gang activity.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Does Not Meet the Standard (Score of 2): *The following paper falls quite a bit short of the standard for Organization because even though "an occasional organizational device is discernible" (i.e., a movement from the name of the town to mentioning a few highlights to the writer's personal feelings about it)... "the piece is simply too short to demonstrate organizational skills."*

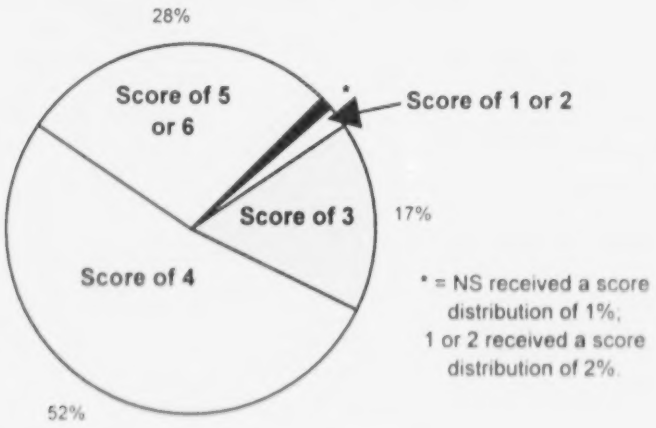
My territory is the city of Cedarbrook. Cedarbrook is in the State of Oregon. It's a nice town. Not many people. It's mosty a troist atrachin. It nown for the caves. or Waterfront Street. I like liveing in Cedarbrook. It's cool.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Voice

In 1997, the average score for eighth graders on the trait of Voice was 4.1 Although students are not required to receive a minimum score to meet a standard in the area of Voice, this trait is scored to provide additional information on students' writing. Overall, 80% of the scores received were a 4 or above, with 28% of the scores being a 5 or a 6. In order to observe trends in this scoring area over time, refer to the bar graph on page 10. The NS category on the pie chart below represents the papers that were not scorable. For an explanation of non-scorable papers, see pages 76-77.

Score Distribution at Grade 8: Voice, 1997


28%
Score of 5 or 6
*
Score of 1 or 2
Score of 3
17%
Score of 4
* = NS received a score distribution of 1%; 1 or 2 received a score distribution of 2%.
52%

Sample Papers

High (Score of 5 or 6): *The following paper scored high in Voice because the writer "seems committed to the topic" of physical fitness, and the writing is "expressive, engaging, and sincere." In addition, the writer here shows a sense of humor in his obvious exaggerations, and he treats the topic with originality and liveliness.*

Pumping iron, that's what I consider real physical fitness. Running up mountains, climbing tall trees, and even chopping wood in my backyard, are all things that keep me in shape. I like exercise so much, that I sometimes dream about getting a field plow for X-mas, strapping the yoke to my shoulders, and plowing endless amounts of fields.

I'm the type of kid you can call a farm boy, tough, rugged, burly and brawny. Physical fitness is what got me strong, muscular, with a high metabolism.

I think that exercise, healthy food, and drinking milk helps me get up and about. If I was fat, I would probably be lazy, which means I possibly wouldn't do much extra activities. I'd sit around the house, eating, sleeping, and watching reruns of Big Brother Jake, Webster, Bonanza, Dear John, and Life Goes On.

People say I'm crazy because I run all the time; morning and night They even spread rumors that I ran through miles of snow, barefooted, for fun. I don't really care though because I know that I'll always be in better shape.

Whether it's on the basketball court, the football field, or in your backyard, running and working out isn't a punishment; it's a benefit.

* * * * * * * * * *

High (Score of 5): *The writer of the paper that follows "seems committed to the topic" of describing his favorite place (a dock by a bridge) and he succeeds in making his place come alive for the reader. He writes with originality, liveliness, and conviction (e.g., "I know every step and every crevice of the bay...Here on the dock, I feel at home...").*

My "territory" is located in this, my home-town of Cedarbrook, Oregon. It is down the street from where I live, and it's really cool.

There are big wooden poles and rocks of the bay, but the most important element, is the water. The water flows silentely, like a small summer breeze.

The dock is fenced in with a fence of near-plaid looking metal. With three boxes of wood which seem to have no use. The wooden floorboard is the only difference between you and the water.

But the reason I go there is because Ive spent more of my life on that riverfront than anywhere else, so I feel alive there, too. I know every step and every crevice of the bay. And although it has changed, it's still the same place.

Boats pass and go bye along with seals, curious of the big monsters, and birds, probably curious of the seals. Here on the dock, I feel at home.

I can remember walking down onto the dock with my mom and dad together, and then going to C.J.'s for some ice cream. We used to have a lot of fun.

For all these reasons and more, the dock by the bridge is my favorite place.

* * * * * * * * * *

Mid-Range (Score of 4): *"A voice is present" in the following piece, and, "in places, the writing is...sincere," especially in the second half.*

I think a privelage is a big thing. When we ask our parents for a privelage I think they should take us serious. I think a teenagers life doesn't have much freedom.

Teenagers have alot of pressure on them like worrieing if their parents are going to yell at them for getting bad grades. They need a little more freedom to take off some of the pressure.

A privelage I've been thinking of is for us to make decisions that grown ups can make. Like decide what should go and what shouldn't. Or a decision about our school like how it can be improved. Or what our school needs.

Our parents would probably say yeah right your just a dumb teenager that gets into trouble. Your not old enough to make a decision like this.

Then we should say at least give us a chance and see if it works out. I'll be serious about this 100% you can count on me. If I do anything wrong you can take this privelage away from me. It will at least take away some of my pressure and I'll know that you trust me. I won't have to worry about as many things either.

This is why I think we should have a special privelage. So we can fill important.

* * * * * * * * * *

Mid-Range (Score of 3): *In the next piece, there is an "occasional sense of the writer behind the words; however, it shifts or disappears a line or two later."*

One night I woke up at like 2:00 AM and noticed it was smoky so I took A look out my bedroom door and noticed that there was a fire, FIRE!, I yelled, screaming at the top of my lungs, my parents woke up, so I ran out to the living room were my sister was sleeping and picked here up, handed her to my mom. About that time my brother woke up, I thought I could safely retreve one Item and it was my stereo, my stereo is my favorite thing in my room because I consistntly

use it, I got it for my 13th birthday for $900 so I had to do alot of beging, I like it alot so thats what I would take

* * * * * * * * * *

The following piece also received a score of 3 for Voice. In this case, the writer seems to have missed an opportunity for strong voice because the subject matter has the potential for showing commitment and sincerity. This sad story, however, is told in a fairly flat, mechanical way. There is an "occasional sense of the writer behind the words," but then the writing becomes flat once again.

I sat quietly in the class room. Boring I thought yoning and looking up at the clock. When does class get over?

Then I started thinking. I wish my mom would pick me up after school today. I never got to see her because my parents were devorst and I lived with my dad.

Suddenly there was a loud crash when the school secretary came in the class room and triped over the chairs that were staked in front of the door. She was lieing flat on her face. Every one laught. she got up tring to smile and handed me a note. Then walked out of the room. The Bell rang. finly class is over I said quietly, Sticking the note in my back pocket and walking out of the school to go home. I walked in the door Dad you home? No respons.

I seen a note on the table saying I'm not going to be home tell 6:00 tonight. Then I rememberd the note in my back pocket, so I polled it out. It said. Dear jamie, meat me after school and we can spend the weakend together if you want to. Because I'm moving Monday to Florida and yoll never see me again. "No" "if only I had reat that letter sooner" I thought.

* * * * * * * * * *

Low (Score of 2): *Given the prompt for this piece, a personal voice would have been appropriate. Instead, the writing is inappropriately impersonal, and "tends to be flat, lifeless, stiff, or mechanical...There is little sense of writing to be read,...and "rarely a sense of interaction between reader and writer."*

The place I feel is my territory is my room. In my room I feel safe and warm. My room is pretty big with a very tall ceiling. Two of the walls have panneling on them, and the other two are painted white. My room is cleaned every couple days so its always clean. My bed is in the corner of my room. Its covers are blue and its very soft. My dresser sits in one of the other corners. It's about four feet tall and three feet wide.

My closet is right next to my dresser, it's filled with some clothes, shoes and sports equipment. My T.V. is in front of my bed, it has a 28 in. screen and it is black. A bookshelf sits in another corner behind my T.V., it's totally full of books with no room for anymore.

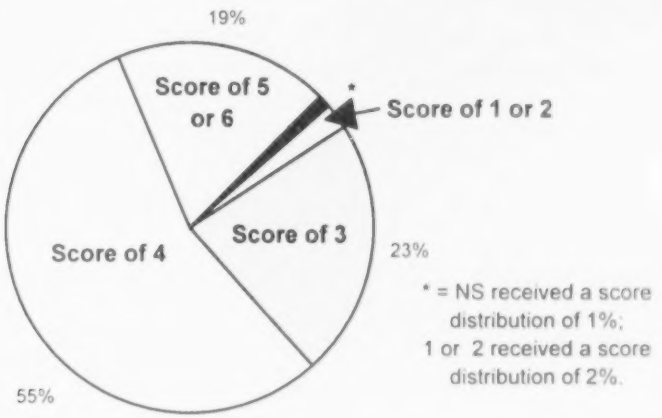
* * * * * * * * * *

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Word Choice

In 1997, the average score for eighth graders on the trait of Word Choice was 4.0. Although students are not required to receive a minimum score to meet a standard in the area of Word Choice, this trait is scored to provide additional information on students' writing. Overall, 74% of the scores received were a 4 or above, with 19% of the scores being a 5 or a 6. In order to observe trends in this scoring area over time, refer to the bar graph on page 10. The NS category on the pie chart below represents the papers that were not scorable. For an explanation of non-scorable papers, see pages 76-77.

Score Distribution at Grade 8: Word Choice, 1997


19%
Score of 5 or 6
*
Score of 1 or 2
Score of 3
23%
Score of 4
55%
* = NS received a score distribution of 1%; 1 or 2 received a score distribution of 2%.

Sample Papers

High (Score of 6): *The words in the following paper "convey the intended message in an exceptionally interesting, precise, and natural way...the writer employs a rich, broad range of words...which energize the writing." This eighth grader often uses ordinary words in an unusual way, and also evokes strong visual images. The specificity of the words lends power to the writing: "dodging grocery carts and the elderly before tackling her in the frozen food section,"..."In 5 minutes she went from demon child to the jolly little toddler I have come to love." (The piece is also strong in Voice.)*

The other day I experienced something that made me wonder. What makes a two year old tick? There I was in a grocery store with my two year old sister; just about to go see what I could find in the candy aisle and magazine rack when my little sister, Maggie, ran off in the opposite direction of my mom and me screaming her head off for no apparent reason. Well of course my mom made me chase her down dodging grocery carts and the elderly before tackling her in the frozen food section. She would not give me a reason for this little tantrum and threw herself on the ground. Now normaly she is a mellow child, but I ended up carrying her to my mom while she did everything physicly possible to escape. In the end I ended up in the car with her for twenty minutes while she made a mess. In 5 minutes she went from demon child to the jolly little toddler I have come to love.

This little escapade stirred up other experiences I have had with her. Such as when I baby sit her she eats so little, but puts back out a whole lot more that I would like to see or smell. She also will watch the same movie over and over and over again. Now she tells me stuff like

"Kenny go to your room," or "Go stand in the corner." She may be a hassell, but I wouldn't trade her for any other little sister in the world.

* * * * * * * * * *

High (Score of 5): *The next piece is also strong in Word Choice. There are a few generic words ("wonderful") and a few phrases that border on being clichés ("They always give it their all and the finished product gives testimony to their time and effort."). Nevertheless, the piece overall contains a broad range of words that are fresh, accurate, and specific ("small town ambience," "epitome of a remote, little forgotten ghost town").*

Cedarbrook is a wonderful town to live in. It's also a wonderful place to grow up, raise kids, and make friends. It's small town ambience makes it seem friendly and welcoming to newcomers and visitors.

Cedarbrook is the epitome of a remote, little, forgotten ghost town with a population smaller than that of a large household. But two people living there or in that vicinity won't stay strangers for long. The whole community is sort of like one big family; everybody knows everybody else, and are usually friendly with each other. Sure, there are a few exceptions, but there aren't many and the overall attitude of most people is friendly and welcoming.

The school is very small and has excellent academic standards. There are nine grades (kindergarten - 8th) and children learn a lot of people skills. There are literally no strangers and very few secrets. Since there's such a large span in age groups, kids learn how to work together and deal with people of all ages. An excellent example of this is the annual spring play put on by Cedarbrook School. The kids work together for more than two months to produce a play worthy of the name. They always give it their all and the finished product gives testimony to their time and effort.

Another positive aspect of living in Cedarbrook is the fact that while it's not totally removed from the world's violence it's also not right in the midst of it. If seeing evidence of the world's decay is depressing all we have to do is put down the newspaper or switch channels on our tv. The decay isn't right outside our front doors.

Finally, Cedarbrook is an excellent place to live because in a world full of violence and anger, it has managed to stay violence and anger free.

* * * * * * * * * *

Mid-Range (Score of 4): *The key to the score of 4 is "words that work." They may not particularly energize the writing, but they are "functional" and "convey the intended message." It is important, however, that the writer employ a "variety of words" as well. Those descriptors apply to the following piece. (The words in the first half of the piece are more "generic," which characterize the 3 score point, but they become more specific in the second half.)*

If my house were on fire and I could only retrieve one thing. It wouldn't be money. It wouldn't be jewels. It would be the one thing that holds the Key to my families past. Our Family Album.

It's a book that I hold dear to my heart. Not more than my family but close. It's a rememberance book of good times that youd shared with your family and friends. When Something awful happens you can open the book and laugh yourself to sleep instead of crying all night.

Most people have lost a loved one at least once in a life time, but you'll never forget them If you have a picture. Wherever they are maybe they'll think about you too.

When you get old and your all alone. You can open a scrapbook and remember when your first child was born. Or how beutiful your fiance looked in her Wedding dress before you tied the not. Turn the page and you see the picture of you and the most beutiful girl in High School with you at the Prom!

Or you can go farther back still. Remember when you where in the 4th grade Talent Show? Or when you won the 6th grade science fair with your project on erosion. And who could forget when your 8th grade Stage Band won the all-state marching championship. All of it and more is right at your fingertips.

I feel that the only reasonable choice is to save your scrap book so you can relive your life anytime anywhere from beginning to end.

Moral: People can't live forever.
Pictures never die.

* * * * * * * * * *

The next piece also scored a 4. Again, the writer employs a variety of words that work, although they don't lend energy to the writing. They function and get the message across adequately.

To me, physical fitness is important for many reasons. One reason is because of the fact that if all you ever did was sit around and eat food without exercise, then weather it be junk food or not, you would become extremely unhealthy and weak. Another reason to stay fit and exercise is because, when you don't do some kind of physical activity, you may become overweight. If this happens chances are that your self esteem and self confidence may diminish; Although some people may be able to cope with being huge. If you run or participate in sports, as I do, then you shouldn't have difficulty finding the time. If you don't then you should try to do something in the way of physical fittness, or else you could get sick or even die. Not to mention, that gorgeous guy who sits in front of you in Science may not look your way again.

* * * * * * * * * *

Low (Score of 2/3): *Language in the following paper is "quite ordinary, lacking interest, precision, and variety." Some words work, but expression is too general and occasionally repetitious.*

I think kids our age (13 and up) should be able to go to diffrent places and do diffret things. I think we should have some sort of transportation, other than our parent and some buses. So we could go and participate in activities without having to organize a time for our parent to take us. If we had another form of transportation like buses, that would take a group of kids where ever the wanted to go. (with in a certain area). Then we would be able to experiance more activities.

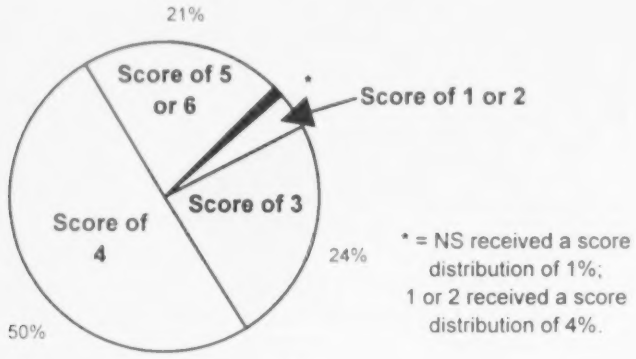
Diffrent groups of kids could go to diffrent places and then get picked up again and taken home, kids would be able to go to; an arcade, to sports, skiing/snowbourding, skate boarding, and swimming along with many other choices that some parents won't take you to.

* * * * * * * * * *

Sentence Fluency

In 1997, the average score for eighth graders on the trait of Sentence Fluency was 3.9. Overall, 71% of the scores received met the standard for the eighth grade benchmark (a 4 or above) with 21% of the scores being a 5 or a 6. In order to observe trends in this scoring area over time, refer to the bar graph on page 10. The NS category on the pie chart below represents the papers that were not scorable. For an explanation of non-scorable papers, see pages 76-77.

Score Distribution at Grade 8: Sentence Fluency, 1997


21%
Score of 5 or 6
*
Score of 1 or 2
Score of 3
Score of 4
24%
50%
* = NS received a score distribution of 1%; 1 or 2 received a score distribution of 4%.

Sample Papers

Exceeds the Standard (Score of 5 or 6): *The following two papers both scored high for Sentence Fluency. The first "has an easy flow and rhythm...Sentences have strong and varied structure that makes expressive oral reading easy and enjoyable." The text is made more interesting particularly by the variation of sentence lengths; notice the combination of some longer, more complex sentences with some short ones (the second paragraph is an excellent example of this).*

It's hard to look back at the past. You always dwell on the mistakes you made, instead of recognizing the good things you've done. Yesterday, I made one mistake that will haunt me for the rest of my afterlife.

Yesterday was the best day of my entire life. Everything was perfect. I had a great swim meet, my report card with straight A's on it arrived in the mail, and this was the first day in a long time that my father didn't have to work. I was so happy.

When my family and I arrived home after the swim meet, we found a strange envelope adressed to me laying on the ground near the front door of our house. We didn't think much of it at the time, and we just went on with the glorious day.

When I woke up the next morning, I felt a little strange. It was a feeling that I had never experienced before. I walked downstairs to the kitchen to get somthing to eat. Everyone was awake before me, which rarely happened. My mother and father were crying along with my two sisters. I asked them what was wrong and they all ignored me. Just then, the phone rang. My mother and my sisters all gathered around my father as he spoke to someone named Officer Grady. While the rest of my family was gathered over by the phone, I sat down at the table. Then, I noticed the strange letter sitting on the table. I grabbed it and started to read what it said. I just could not believe it! This is what it said:

Dear Miss Jocelyn:

I was greatly astonished by your performance today at the swim meet. I hope this has been one of the best days of your life, because if you fall asleep before midnight tonight, it will certainly be your last.

Sincerely,

?

P.S. Have a nice afterlife!

All I could think about then was, "If I only had read that letter one day sooner."

But, I also realized why everything was the way is was and that there was nothing I could do to change it. I was dead.

* * * * * * * * * *

The following piece also exceeds the standard for Sentence Fluency. Notice especially the "variation in sentence structure, length, and beginnings that add interest to the text."

My favorite place or "territory," is our family cabin in Cedarbrook, Oregon.

It is of a barn-red color with white trim. On the slanted roof, painted in big white letters are the words "River's Edge," wich is the cabin's name. The interior of the cabin consists of two bedrooms, with curtains instead of doors, a living room / dining room, and a kitchen. Decorating the walls of River's Edge are the antlers of deer and elk my great-grandparents shot, along with pictures and paintings my great-grandmother made of everyone holding the fish they caught during their stay.

River's Edge has no electricity. Once it had running water from a spring, but it kept pumping in sand, so we go get our water in buckets from an underground spring on our property. To light the place in the evening we use oil lamps, or sometimes we use a generator. To cook we have a wood burning cook-stove, and we also burn would for heat. When someone has to go to the bathroom, there is an outhouse in the corner of the lot, the same color as the cabin wich people reffer to as the "Little River's Edge."

Across the street from River's Edge, you can find another piece of our property. From the road you can see the Cedarbrook River past the trees and brush. When you follow a dirt path, you come to a small stretch of sand next to the river. Here, we go fishing and swimming, and from here you have a beautiful view of mountains, especially when the sun is shining on a clear day.

This little cabin in the woods is so peaceful, remote, and filled with natural beauty, you have all the time in the world to sit and meditate while enjoying your surroundings. That is why I consider my family cabin my "territory."

* * * * * * * * * *

Meets the Standard (Score of 4): *Both of the following papers meet the standard for fluency. The first one has qualities of a 5 because the dialogue sounds so natural, but the rest of the paper doesn't hold up, particularly the last three paragraphs, in which each sentence is connected by "and...."*

One hot day in August, Julia and I were strolling along the beach in Cedarbrook, Oregon. Then we both stopped and stared at a pile of moving seaweed. As we got closer to the pile we saw an otter tangled in the seaweed.

"What should we do?" asked Julia.

"Let's check and see if it is injured." I suggested.

When we finnished checking the otter, we found that it didn't have any injuries.

"Now what should we do? We just can't leave it hear." Julia said.

"Why don't we go get our parents and bring them over here." I said.

So we both ran across the beach to our parents.

"Mom! We found an otter tangled in the seaweed! It isn't hurt. What should we do?" I asked.

"Show us where it is." Julia's mom said.

Julia and I took them to where we found the otter. It was still there.

"Well," said my mom, "Sense you two girls said it wasn't hurt. I guess the only thing we can do is put it back in the ocean."

We all bent down and picked the seaweed off of the otter and carried it down to the ocean, and gently set it in the water.

The otter swam around in circles, and then swam away from the beach.

After we couldn't see the otter again we walked back to our beach towels, and picked up our things, and then we drove over to Julia's house for dinner.

* * * * * * * * * *

The next paper just barely meets the standard for Sentence Fluency. The reader can move easily through the piece, and it has a fairly natural sound, but parts are less than fluid. There is some variation of sentence patterns and beginnings, but the number of rather rambling constructions almost causes this paper to fall short of the standard.

Physical fitness is important for your health and the way you look. It works to get rid of the fat in your body so you can stay healthy. As an example I used to be a little chubby but through exercise I have much more muscle than I would have if I had done nothing. For instance my friend also has a little fat he wants to work off without just dieting, so I told him to exercise so he would feel and look great, too.

Also it is important because it keeps me living longer. This happens because blood travels through artereys, and once in awhile an arterey might get clogged and the flow of blood could be stoped, ensuing will be a heart attack. To help prevent this you must exercise to burn cells so they wont clog your artereys.

It is also important because it might help you find Mr / Mrs. Right. An example is that same friend I spoke of before finally got a girlfriend. He exercised and started to get noticed by girls and then finally got a girlfriend. So exercise will make you look and feel good.

* * * * * * * * * *

Does Not Meet the Standard (Score of 3:) *The following two papers fall short of the standard for fluency. "Some passages invite fluid oral reading, but others do not." In the first, the writing is somewhat mechanical, especially because certain words and phrases are repeated in one sentence after another unnecessarily (i.e., the prepositional phrases about the waterfall).*

It started out at camp when we were gowing for a hike, or a picnic

We were gowing to a place where there was a waterfall. When we got there we all went over to the waterfall to look at it.

After we were done looking at the waterfall, we explored all around the waterfall. There was a place with all these rocks and it had water running by the rocks.

One of the kids fell with one foot in butwean two rucks. In the hole there was a hornets nest or some kind of nest. They stong him alot of times and other kids. But I did not get stong. So we started back to the camp.

The kid that got stong a lot saw a quin bee coming tord him. There was a cliff next to him, and he started to fall down the cliff tring to get away from the bee.

I grabed him very fast and pulled him up so he wold not fall and die.

I felt real good about saving him and we had fun the rest of the day.

* * * * * * * * * *

The next paper also scored a 3 in fluency. The writing demonstrates control over simple sentence structures, but less control over more complex sentences (notice the second sentence, for example).

I think that the best living environment for a family would be Madagascar. I was watching the news the other night, and they were discussing a topic on the best place for a family that wants to live in a clean, well behaved environment would go. There, they don't have drugs, luting, garbage, or fighting. It may sound perfect, but I think that it's actually pretty hard to keep clean. Each person must cooperate to keep up their part in the country.

To help keep their contry clean, they (meaning the police & council) must inforce the laws so that knowone will be tempted to break a law.

For instance, if someone was to stick a piece of chewed gum on the bottom of a public seat, if they were caught, they would get sent to jail & get a ticket. It may sound tuff, but it all ends up working out in the end. From that, they get a clean, safe place to live for as long as they want!

* * * * * * * * * *

Does Not Meet the Standard (Score of 2): *The following paper written to an imaginative prompt received a score of 2 for Sentence Fluency because the writing is "rambling...A significant number of awkward, rambling" sentences appear throughout the piece. Sentences do not have much variety: every phrase or sentence seems strung together with "so," "and," "but," or "because."*

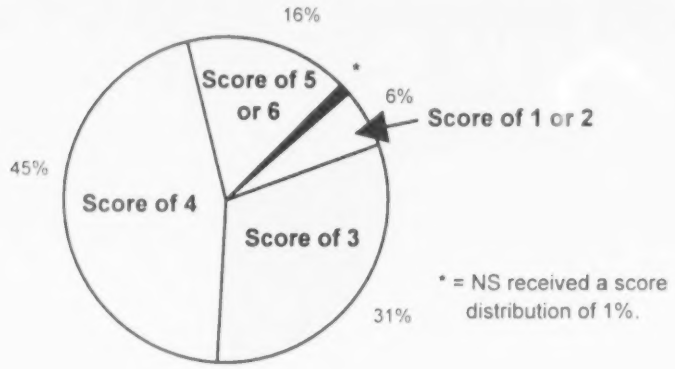
If I only had read that letter a day sooner. I wouldn't of got arrested. because one of my ants were getting married and the wedding was in two days, so I would of had to leave and go to Reno, but I didn't get the letter in time, because it got sent to the wrong house. So the day before I got the letter, me and some friends were walking down to the store, and then the police came and arrested us, because we fit the description of the kids that beat up an old man. So if I had of got the letter a day sooner I would of been in Reno, instead of walking with my friends.

* * * * * * * * * *

Conventions

In 1997, the average score for eighth graders on the trait of Conventions was 3.7. Overall, 61% of the scores received met the standard for the eighth grade benchmark (a 4 or above) with 16% of the scores being a 5 or a 6. In order to observe trends in this scoring area over time, refer to the bar graph on page 10. The NS category on the pie chart below represents the papers that were not scorable. For an explanation of non-scorable papers, see pages 76-77.

Score Distribution at Grade 8: Conventions, 1997



Sample Papers

Exceeds the Standard (Score of 5 or 6): *The following two papers exceed the standard for Conventions. The first is not typical of 8th grade papers, particularly because of the subject matter (financial investments!), but raters do see papers this strong in Conventions. Notice the range of conventions used that bring this paper to a score above the standard (i.e., parentheses, difficult words spelled correctly, hyphenated words, and possessives) in addition to sound end-of-sentence and internal punctuation. The paper also serves as a reminder that a paper need not be perfect in order to earn a 5 or 6; there is one spelling error ("aggresive") and a couple of missing internal commas.*

I am making some important choices in my life right now. I am currently deciding where to invest my money so that I will be in good financial shape when I head for college.

Two years ago my dad and I decided to invest my money in a CD (certificate of deposit) that matured two years later. However, after last year's amazing market returns I realized I had been shortchanging myself. While my CD gave a yield of 6%, the average growth mutual fund produced a 30% yield. That is when I started getting information about my investment options.

My parents were helpful to me by arranging appointments with financial experts with me. I have learned that young people, such as myself, can invest in somewhat riskier options than an adult. One thing I have to keep in mind is that after a great year like last year, most experts agree that the market will not climb nearly as much as it did last year. Therefore, I will take a diversified approach and invest not only in aggresive growth options but in fixed-rate options, such as CD's, as well.

Like most young people, I don't have very much money so it is beneficial for me to pick funds with low minimum initial investments. I have found a few great mutual funds and stocks so I am almost ready to invest in them.

This whole investment experience has given me a lot of knowledge about the art of investing. As many financial experts have pointed out, your first investing experience should be as much about learning as it should be about making money.

* * * * * * * * * *

The next paper also earned a 5 in Conventions. Like the previous paper, this one demonstrates strong control over conventions. The author purposely uses an informal, conversational style as she speaks from the point of view of a fire hydrant. Fragments are used quite often, but very effectively, and control over standard conventions, including end-of-sentence punctuation is demonstrated in other places throughout the piece. Again, a wide range of conventions is employed, including use of quotes, a question, possessives, correct spelling even of difficult words, parentheses, ellipses, and exclamation points.

Staunch. Sturdy. A dog's best friend. All of these words have been used to describe me. I'm a fire hydrant in a nice residential neighborhood in Happy Acres, Anystate. Y'know, we're competing with that mouse place for the title "Happiest Place on Earth." It's really a great place to live. I'll tell you about it.

See that blue car there? It belongs to Gladys Carmichael, leader of the local Ladies Club. She's pretty nice, but her Doberman, Buster Boy...well, he's a force to be reckoned with. And unfortunately, I've had to reckon with that force a few times.

The lady over there in the pink fur is Millie Rodgers. Her husband is supposed to be awful rich. I'd say they are, with an expensive pair of dogs like Muffy and Fluffy, their toy poodles. Not terrible dogs, but awful curious. Too curious, sometimes.

Hey, there's Harvey Winkle. He's a card-carrying member of the SPCFH (Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Fire Hydrants). My favorite person in this town, Harvey is. He's one of those guys that you've gotta love.

He's not. Rob Royman. Ask me, he's trained his dog and cat to...well, you know. And it really sickens me. Literally. He's just lucky I don't have arms. Or legs. Or teeth. I'd have some fun if I did. Luckily, there aren't too many like him around.

Well, look! It's Mandy Johnson. She just got her drivers license, and she's still kind of reckless. First accident she got into, she ran up a curb, and straight at me. I don't blame her though. She's just a kid.

Well, this is it, in a nutshell. Happy Acres, Anystate. In my opinion, it really is the happiest place on earth. I'm sure you think so too.

* * * * * * * * * *

Meets the Standard (Score of 4): *The first piece that follows easily meets the standard for Conventions. Errors are few and minor: one is a misspelling ("wonder" instead of "wander"), and in another place, there seem to be words missing, which perhaps occurred as the writer copied a previous draft. Although the paper is mechanically very sound, it can't score above the standard without demonstrating "skill in using a* ***wide range*** *of conventions in a sufficiently long and complex piece;" in other words, the writer would need to employ a greater variety of conventions than he does.*

Now that I am older, I no longer have a favorite place that I wonder off to. However, when I was younger, my dad made me a tree fort with one of its corners resting on a tall stump, and the others were attached to strong, twisted trees and branches. The area of the tree fort was about five and a half by about six feet. The ceiling was about six feet tall with a strong plastic roof to keep out the rain. Standing up from of the fort was a railing that surrounded the fort

except for the entrance so no one would fall out. In order to get up into the tree fort, I had to climb up twisted branches that were as easy to climb as a ladder.

In between our house and our neighbor's house, there were some bushes and trees where the tree fort was positioned. It was just high enough to see over the bushes and through the trees in order to see my house and the neighbor's.

I was the saddest of all my family when we moved because I knew I would never have another place to wonder off to that would be quite as good as what I had.

* * * * * * * * * *

This second paper also meets the standard in Conventions with a high 4. It shows control, with correct end-of-sentence punctuation (there is one fragment in the first paragraph, but it works effectively). Internal punctuation is sometimes incorrect ("Well thats my father."), but it's solid for the most part. This writer does demonstrate a range of conventions used correctly: hyphenated phrases, quotes around examples of "snowboard lingo," parentheses, colon, and a few more, but the errors prevent it from scoring higher than a 4.

My father is a snowboard fanatic. There I said it straight out. Do you even know what it's like living with one? Someone that eats, breathes, and talks allday about nothing but snowboarding? Well thats my father.

Although he looks just like your average 40 yr. old man with brown hair and hazel eyes, but underneath that he's a crazy wish-he-was-20-again snowboarder. My father buys and reads every snowboard magazine ever made and has it memorized in a matter of seconds. He also uses funny snowboard lingo like "fakie" and "360 spin move." Sometimes we're even stuck watching stupid snowboard movies like "How to Improve your Technique."

When he first started snowboarding (less than 6 months ago), he went out and blew all his pocket money on a Grateful Dead board, a gray oversized grunge jacket, expensive "to big" gloves, and some "humongus" boots.

He thinks he made the best decision of his life: Buying a Snowboard. It must have, because he can't shut up about snowboarding.

* * * * * * * * * *

Does Not Meet the Standard (Score of 3): *The following two papers miss the mark in Conventions with a score of 3. The first definitely meets the standard for Ideas and Content, for Organization, and for Sentence Fluency, but it has a "significant need for editing" with a few characteristics even of the 2 score-point. End-of-sentence punctuation is usually correct, but there are several fragments that are not effective, at least one comma splice, and many internal punctuation errors. Possessives and plurals are confused ("couple's who go through"), verbs and possessives are confused ("catch's my attention"), and misspellings of common words occur fairly frequently ("entrence," "sturres," "dieing").*

In a little tucked away place in the woods, between two small streets and a growing town, I can go and ponder the world. With an old mossy wood entrence, dripping from the rain, and a sign reading, "Please stay on the path," I find my answers.

A stream runs down a man made rock path. A path of large stones guides you around the minerature trees. In summer the garden will be lusious with color.

Not an animal sturres, for it is cold, and raining. They too wait for the summer.

I go by a bambo, planted in a cement ring. A dieing bush streatches towards the stream, the rain either will save it or wash it away with the other debre.

An old blue pine tree, only about ten feet tall had begun to fall over. So the park ranger put up a support. that caused it to drape over the stream. Like an arc for angles to dance through.

An ornge bush catch's my attention from the top of the garden. Brighter than any other bush. It sits next to a pine wood coverage, to keep passer's dry from the rain. The sweet smell of pine fills me. No pine sol, air freshner, potpori, fake similation will ever match the true forest air.

Next to the garden is a forest of trees planted in rows. I call it, "Lover's sad hide-away." It's scarred from the couple's who go through and leave their marks, by initials or symbols, in the soft white bark. Scarring the tree for life, to show effection for a person that may only be in their life a little while. Sap goes over the wounds; as if it is slowly crying.

This is where I go when I want to think, laugh, cry, or just walk through the trees.

* * * * * * * * * *

The piece that follows also scored just below the standard for Conventions. It's an interesting story and holds together for Ideas and Content, Organization, and Sentence Fluency, as did the piece above, but conventions need work. In this piece, pronoun case and verb tense consistency are recurring problems (e.g., "...him and Justin was still buried in the sand, and Justin is still buried"), as is subject-verb agreement (e.g., "we was able to get him out of the sand"). End-of-sentence punctuation is usually correct, but there are some internal punctuation errors. Spelling errors distract the reader (e.g., "fingures").

When I lived in Cedarbrook, Oregon, my friend CJ Goss use to invite me on camping trips to the coast in the summer. I'D also invite him camping sometimes, but one summer when CJ invited me camping, we saved his little brothers life and this is the story behind it.

Early in the afternoon, CJ and I were digging holes in the side of the a sand bank. We was having alot of fun that day. CJ's little brother Tim and his friend Justin wanted to build little forts and holes in the side of sand banks like me and CJ were. In the blink of an eye, my hole collapsed while my legs were in it, so only my legs got buried.

We went over to Tim and Justin and told them not to dig holes in the side of sand banks because the holes might collaps.

CJ and I still wanted a fort so we decided to make one on the ground out of drift wood from the ocean. We had the perfect fort until Tim came and told us that him and Justin was buried in the sand, and Justin is still buried in it.

At first we didn't belive him but then we noticed how much damp sand from the sand bank was on him. We ran threw the wall of our fort, and then ran down the beach as fast as we could.

When we got to Justin, only his right hands fingures, nose and mouth was showing. It was hard for him to breath becouse the sand over him was pushing a gainst his chest.

CJ and I unburied him part way and tried to pull him out but the sand was too heavy. We unburied him somemore and we was able to get him out of the sand.

I felt good at first but then he was just the same trouble maker he used to be.

* * * * * * * * * *

Does Not Meet the Standard (Score of 2): *The writing in this paper "demonstrates little control of standard conventions. Errors are significant, frequent, and impede readability." In particular, there are "many end-of-sentence punctuation errors;" the piece has many run-on sentences and comma splices. In order to score a 3, end-of-sentence punctuation is usually correct, which is, perhaps, one of the most basic writing conventions.*

When I was younger I hated waiting. I thought that waiting was so bad no one could make it Better and the one thing I allways did was wait. I waited to go to the mall I waited to get out of school I waited for every thing.

About a year ago I was sitting around the house waiting for my mom to get home from the mall she had gone shoping for my birthday present and it had been an hour. While I was

waiting I started doing home-work that was from last week when I was sick. I finished all my home work buy now it had been 3 h. and I started cleaning my room, I had it so clean if you walked in my room you would of thought it was some one elses. I was so board I never thought I could clean my room this clean or ever finish my home work.

When my mom came home I got to see my Birthday presents I had gotten a brown leather Jacket and a CD Cassette stereo system. The first thing I did was put my Jacket on. I pluged in my stereo put in a CD and slowly moved the volume all the way up. My Mom started yelling at me to turn it off so I did. I started complaining about waiting so long to get my presents and for her to get home and she told me

> If you wouldnt have waited you wouldent have goten the stuff you did get and most often waiting brings more pleasure and action to your life

* * * * * * * * * *

Non-scorable Student Papers

For a variety of reasons, some student papers written for the Statewide Assessment are returned to students without scores. Papers that fall into one of the following categories are considered non-scorable:

Blank

The student writing folder has no writing in it. (The student may have been absent or exempted from the assessment. Occasionally, a rough draft or a pre-write written on other paper will be found enclosed in the writing folder, but unless writing appears on the designated pages, it is not scored.)

Too Short

Sometimes students do not submit enough writing to enable raters to assess it in a meaningful way. When the sample is too short, it is impossible to see how an idea is developed, how details are organized, whether the writer can utilize a broad range of words, and so forth for each trait. An example is the following:

"One of my favorites music to listen to is (name of singer) Becuse her music isn't hard Rock and She doen't say rude thang like some peoples music is and she talks about thang that really happens in life."

As Oregon moves toward the Certificate of Initial Mastery and Certificate of Advanced Mastery system, students will want to make sure that they write a piece of sufficient length to be assessed.

Too Long

The paper exceeds the length allowed in the Administration Manual: "An extra sheet may be attached to allow a student to complete a thought—no more than finishing the sentence or paragraph begun on the final page of the writing folder." This code is not used if the student was tested under modified conditions (i.e., code 3 or 5 is marked on the writing folder).

Illegible

Obviously, papers that have been written in handwriting that cannot be decoded cannot be scored. If a paper is returned with this code (IL), it means that several raters have tried to read it but cannot. Papers are never returned unscored because they are messy or extremely difficult to read, only when they are impossible to read.

Non-English

Papers are returned unscored when they have been written either entirely or for the most part in a language other than English. Sometimes it seems evident to raters that a paper has been written by a student for whom English is a second language (see section that follows on ESL students), but, so long as the paper is mostly in English, it is scored using the scoring guide. (In 1996, papers written in Spanish were photocopied and sent to a group of teachers who later scored the papers using a Scoring Guide that has been adapted to Spanish. It is anticipated that writing in Spanish will continue to be scored at a separate scoring facility. Additional languages may be added as resources allow.)

Profane or Violent

Papers that contain profanity and/or extreme graphic violence are also returned unscored. Raters and Scoring Directors use their judgment here. A certain level of language and violence is entirely appropriate in certain contexts, but just as most schools and classrooms have limitations on these aspects of expression, so does the Oregon Writing Assessment. Writers in the real world must be aware of their audiences, and so must students as writers; some modes of expression are simply inappropriate in certain settings, and the Assessment follows the same general guidelines as most classrooms.

Miscellaneous

If a paper falls into one of the following other categories, it is not scored:

- poetry or plays (the scoring guide is designed to assess only prose; students could include poetry or plays in their Collections of Work Samples if they wanted to showcase those forms of writing);
- plagiarism;
- some other reason approved by the Scoring Director of the site.

Special Needs Students

Federal regulations stipulate that individuals with disabilities and those with limited English proficiency be given equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from any program or activity customarily granted to all students.

Therefore, all students in these categories are considered eligible for inclusion in the Oregon Statewide Assessment Program unless they are individually exempted based on the characteristics of their instructional programs (in the case of students with disabilities), or on the basis of documented evidence of their limited proficiency in English. Each student must be considered individually in making such exemptions.

The Department of Education publishes specific criteria to be considered in making these individual decisions in the manuals for administering the statewide assessments.

- **Scoring the writing of English as a Second Language (ESL) Students and Students with Individualized Education Programs (IEP's)**

Once it is determined that individual ESL and IEP students should participate in the writing assessment (and most do), some parents and educators question the value of applying the scoring guide to their writing in the same way in which it is applied to other Oregon students. If students have developed strong skills in English, of course there is no problem, but when students are still struggling, their teachers are anxious to recognize them for the progress they are making, even though they may not yet have achieved the desired standards in writing.

In Oregon's Standards Model, students have many opportunities to demonstrate what they can do and the progress they have made. The best place to demonstrate progress is in the Collection of Work Samples, in which students can put work done over time that does, in fact, highlight the changes in their skills.

The function of the Statewide Writing Assessment, however, is to give students straight, honest feedback about their writing skills in standard written English based on the scoring guide, which should be applied in the same way to all student work submitted. This information should be valuable to all students and their parents and teachers. Teachers should help students and their families interpret the results and put them into a healthy, constructive perspective, acknowledging good effort and commitment when they have occurred.

WRITE

Official Scoring Guide

Ideas/Content

6	5	4
The writing is exceptionally clear, focused, and interesting. It holds the reader's attention throughout. Main ideas stand out and are developed by strong support and rich details suitable to audience and purpose. The writing is characterized by • clarity, focus, and control. • main idea(s) that stand out. • supporting, relevant, carefully selected details; when appropriate, use of resources provides strong, accurate, credible support. • a thorough, balanced, in-depth explanation / exploration of the topic; the writing makes connections and shares insights. • content and selected details that are well-suited to audience and purpose.	**The writing is clear, focused and interesting. It holds the reader's attention. Main ideas stand out and are developed by supporting details suitable to audience and purpose. The writing is characterized by** • clarity, focus, and control. • main idea(s) that stand out. • supporting, relevant, carefully selected details; when appropriate, use of resources provides strong, accurate, credible support. • a thorough, balanced explanation / exploration of the topic; the writing makes connections and shares insights. • content and selected details that are well-suited to audience and purpose.	**The writing is clear and focused. The reader can easily understand the main ideas. Support is present, although it may be limited or rather general. The writing is characterized by** • an easily identifiable purpose. • clear main idea(s). • supporting details that are relevant, but may be overly general or limited in places; when appropriate, resources are used to provide accurate support. • a topic that is explored / explained, although developmental details may occasionally be out of balance with the main idea(s); some connections and insights may be present. • content and selected details that are relevant, but perhaps not consistently well-chosen for audience and purpose.
3	**2**	**1**
The reader can understand the main ideas, although they may be overly broad or simplistic, and the results may not be effective. Supporting detail is often limited, insubstantial, overly general, or occasionally slightly off-topic. The writing is characterized by • an easily identifiable purpose and main idea(s). • predictable or overly-obvious main ideas or plot; conclusions or main points seem to echo observations heard elsewhere. • support that is attempted, but developmental details that are often limited in scope, uneven, somewhat off-topic, predictable, or overly general. • details that may not be well-grounded in credible resources; they may be based on clichés, stereotypes or questionable sources of information. • difficulties when moving from general observations to specifics.	**Main ideas and purpose are somewhat unclear or development is attempted but minimal. The writing is characterized by** • a purpose and main idea(s) that may require extensive inferences by the reader. • minimal development; insufficient details. • irrelevant details that clutter the text. • extensive repetition of detail.	**The writing lacks a central idea or purpose. The writing is characterized by** • ideas that are extremely limited or simply unclear. • attempts at development that are minimal or non-existent; the paper is too short to demonstrate the development of an idea.

Appendix A

84

Organization

6

The organization enhances the central idea(s) and its development. The order and structure are compelling and move the reader through the text easily. The writing is characterized by

- effective, perhaps creative, sequencing; the organizational structure fits the topic, and the writing is easy to follow
- a strong, inviting beginning that draws the reader in and a strong, satisfying sense of resolution or closure
- smooth, effective transitions among all elements (sentences, paragraphs, ideas)
- details that fit where placed

5

The organization enhances the central idea(s) and its development. The order and structure are strong and move the reader through the text. The writing is characterized by

- effective sequencing; the organizational structure fits the topic, and the writing is easy to follow
- an inviting beginning that draws the reader in and a satisfying sense of resolution or closure
- smooth, effective transtions among all elements (sentences, paragraphs, ideas)
- details that fit where placed

4

Organization is clear and coherent. Order and structure are present, but may seem formulaic. The writing is characterized by

- clear sequencing
- an organization that may be predictable
- a recognizable, developed beginning that may not be particularly inviting; a developed conclusion that may lack subtlety
- a body that is easy to follow with details that fit where placed
- transitions that may be stilted or formulaic
- organization which helps the reader, despite some weaknesses

3

An attempt has been made to organize the writing; however, the overall structure is inconsistent or skeletal. The writing is characterized by

- attempts at sequencing, but the order or the relationship among ideas may occasionally be unclear
- a beginning and an ending which, although present, are either undeveloped or too obvious (e.g., "My topic is..."; "These are all the reasons that...")
- transitions that sometimes work. The same few transitional devices (e.g., coordinating conjunctions, numbering, etc.) may be overused
- a structure that is skeletal or too rigid
- placement of details that may not always be effective
- organization which lapses in some places, but helps the reader in others

2

The writing lacks a clear organizational structure. An occasional organizational device is discernible; however, the writing is either difficult to follow and the reader has to reread substantial portions, or the piece is simply too short to demonstrate organizational skills. The writing is characterized by

- some attempts at sequencing, but the order or the relationship among ideas is frequently unclear
- a missing or extremely undeveloped beginning, body, and/or ending
- a lack of transitions, or when present, ineffective or overused
- a lack of an effective organizational structure
- details that seem to be randomly placed, leaving the reader frequently confused

1

The writing lacks coherence; organization seems haphazard and disjointed. Even after rereading, the reader remains confused. The writing is characterized by

- a lack of effective sequencing
- a failure to provide an identifiable beginning, body and/or ending
- a lack of transitions
- pacing that is consistently awkward; the reader feels either mired down in trivia or rushed along too rapidly
- a lack of organization which ultimately obscures or distorts the main point

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Voice

6	5	4
The writer has chosen a voice appropriate for the topic, purpose, and audience. The writer seems deeply committed to the topic, and there is an exceptional sense of "writing to be read." The writing is expressive, engaging, or sincere. The writing is characterized by • an effective level of closeness to or distance from the audience (e.g., a narrative should have a strong personal voice, while an expository piece may require extensive use of outside resources and a more academic voice; nevertheless, both should be engaging, lively, or interesting. Technical writing may require greater distance.). • a exceptionally strong sense of audience; the writer seems to be aware of the reader and of how to communicate the message most effectively. The reader may discern the writer behind the words and feel a sense of interaction. • a sense that the topic has come to life; when appropriate, the writing may show originality, liveliness, honesty, conviction, excitement, humor, or suspense.	**The writer has chosen a voice appropriate for the topic, purpose, and audience. The writer seems committed to the topic, and there is a sense of "writing to be read." The writing is expressive, engaging, or sincere. The writing is characterized by** • an appropriate level of closeness to or distance from the audience (e.g., a narrative should have a strong personal voice, while an expository piece may require extensive use of outside resources and a more academic voice; nevertheless, both should be engaging, lively, or interesting. Technical writing may require greater distance.). • a strong sense of audience; the writer seems to be aware of the reader and of how to communicate the message most effectively. The reader may discern the writer behind the words and feel a sense of interaction. • a sense that the topic has come to life; when appropriate, the writing may show originality, liveliness, honesty, conviction, excitement, humor, or suspense.	**A voice is present. The writer demonstrates commitment to the topic, and there may be a sense of "writing to be read." In places, the writing is expressive, engaging, or sincere. The writing is characterized by** • a questionable or inconsistent level of closeness to or distance from the audience. • a sense of audience; the writer seems to be aware of the reader but has not consistently employed an appropriate voice. The reader may glimpse the writer behind the words and feel a sense of interaction in places. • liveliness, sincerity, or humor when appropriate; however, at times the writing may be either inappropriately casual or personal, or inappropriately formal and stiff.
3	**2**	**1**
The writer's commitment to the topic seems inconsistent. A sense of the writer may emerge at times; however, the voice is either inappropriately personal or an inappropriately impersonal. The writing is characterized by • a limited sense of audience; the writer's awareness of the reader is unclear. • an occasional sense of the writer behind the words; however, the voice may shift or disappear a line or two later and the writing become somewhat mechanical. • a limited ability to shift to a more objective voice when necessary.	**The writing provides little sense of involvement or commitment. There is no evidence that the writer has chosen a suitable voice. The writing is characterized by** • little engagement of the writer; the writing tends to be largely flat, lifeless, stiff, or mechanical. • a voice that is likely to be overly informal and personal. • a lack of audience awareness; there is little sense of "writing to be read." • little or no hint of the writer behind the words. There is rarely a sense of interaction between reader and writer.	**The writing seems to lack a sense of involvement or commitment. The writing is characterized by** • no engagement of the writer; the writing is flat and lifeless. • a lack of audience awareness; there is no sense of "writing to be read." • no hint of the writer behind the words. There is no sense of interaction between writer and reader; the writing does not involve or engage the reader.

Word Choice

6

Words convey the intended message in an exceptionally interesting, precise, and natural way appropriate to audience and purpose. The writer employs a rich, broad range of words which have been carefully chosen and thoughtfully placed for impact. The writing is characterized by

- accurate, strong, specific words; powerful words energize the writing.
- fresh, original expression; slang, if used, seems purposeful and is effective.
- vocabulary that is striking and varied, but that is natural and not overdone.
- ordinary words used in an unusual way.
- words that evoke strong images; figurative language may be used.

5

Words convey the intended message in an interesting, precise, and natural way appropriate to audience and purpose. The writer employs a broad range of words which have been carefully chosen and thoughtfully placed for impact. The writing is characterized by

- accurate, specific words; word choices energize the writing.
- fresh, vivid expression; slang, if used, seems purposeful and is effective.
- vocabulary that may be striking and varied, but that is natural and not overdone.
- ordinary words used in an unusual way.
- words that evoke clear images; figurative language may be used.

4

Words effectively convey the intended message. The writer employs a variety of words that are functional and appropriate to audience and purpose. The writing is characterized by

- words that work but do not particularly energize the writing.
- expression that is functional; however, slang, if used, does not seem purposeful and is not particularly effective.
- attempts at colorful language that may occasionally seem overdone.
- occasional overuse of technical language or jargon.
- rare experiments with language; however, the writing may have some fine moments and generally avoids clichés.

3

Language is quite ordinary, lacking interest, precision and variety, or may be inappropriate to audience and purpose in places. The writer does not employ a variety of words, producing a sort of "'generic" paper filled with familiar words and phrases. The writing is characterized by

- words that work, but that rarely capture the reader's interest.
- expression that seems mundane and general; slang, if used, does not seem purposeful and is not effective.
- attempts at colorful language that seem overdone or forced.
- words that are accurate for the most part, although misused words may occasionally appear; technical language or jargon may be overused or inappropriately used.
- reliance on clichés and overused expressions.

2

Language is monotonous and/or misused, detracting from the meaning and impact. The writing is characterized by

- words that are colorless, flat or imprecise.
- monotonous repetition or overwhelming reliance on worn expressions that repeatedly detract from the message.
- images that are fuzzy or absent altogether.

1

The writing shows an extremely limited vocabulary or is so filled with misuses of words that the meaning is obscured. Only the most general kind of message is communicated because of vague or imprecise language. The writing is characterized by

- general, vague words that fail to communicate.
- an extremely limited range of words.
- words that simply do not fit the text; they seem imprecise, inadequate, or just plain wrong.

Sentence Fluency

6	5	4
The writing has an effective flow and rhythm. Sentences show a high degree of craftsmanship, with consistently strong and varied structure that makes expressive oral reading easy and enjoyable. The writing is characterized by • a natural, fluent sound; it glides along with one sentence flowing effortlessly into the next. • extensive variation in sentence structure, length, and beginnings that add interest to the text. • sentence structure that enhances meaning by drawing attention to key ideas or reinforcing relationships among ideas. • varied sentence patterns that create an effective combination of power and grace. • strong control over sentence structure; fragments, if used at all, work well. • stylistic control; dialogue, if used, sounds natural.	**The writing has an easy flow and rhythm. Sentences are carefully crafted, with strong and varied structure that makes expressive oral reading easy and enjoyable. The writing is characterized by** • a natural, fluent sound; it glides along with one sentence flowing into the next. • variation in sentence structure, length, and beginnings that add interest to the text. • sentence structure that enhances meaning. • control over sentence structure; fragments, if used at all, work well. • stylistic control; dialogue, if used, sounds natural.	**The writing flows; however, connections between phrases or sentences may be less than fluid. Sentence patterns are somewhat varied, contributing to ease in oral reading. The writing is characterized by** • a natural sound; the reader can move easily through the piece, although it may lack a certain rhythm and grace. • some repeated patterns of sentence structure, length, and beginnings that may detract somewhat from overall impact. • strong control over simple sentence structures, but variable control over more complex sentences; fragments, if present, are usually effective. • occasional lapses in stylistic control; dialogue, if used, sounds natural for the most part, but may at times sound stilted or unnatural.
3 **The writing tends to be mechanical rather than fluid. Occasional awkward constructions may force the reader to slow down or reread. The writing is characterized by** • some passages that invite fluid oral reading; however, others do not. • some variety in sentence structure, length, and beginnings, although the writer falls into repetitive sentence patterns. • good control over simple sentence structures, but little control over more complex sentences; fragments, if present, may not be effective. • sentences which, although functional, lack energy. • lapses in stylistic control; dialogue, if used, may sound stilted or unnatural.	**2** **The writing tends to be either choppy or rambling. Awkward constructions often force the reader to slow down or reread. The writing is characterized by** • significant portions of the text that are difficult to follow or read aloud. • sentence patterns that are monotonous (e.g., subject-verb or subject-verb-object). • a significant number of awkward, choppy, or rambling constructions.	**1** **The writing is difficult to follow or to read aloud. Sentences tend to be incomplete, rambling, or very awkward. The writing is characterized by** • text that does not invite--and may not even permit--smooth oral reading. • confusing word order that is often jarring and irregular. • sentence structure that frequently obscures meaning. • sentences that are disjointed, confusing, or rambling.

Conventions

6

The writing demonstrates exceptionally strong control of standard writing conventions (e.g., punctuation, spelling, capitalization, paragraph breaks, grammar and usage) and uses them effectively to enhance communication. Errors are so few and so minor that the reader can easily skim right over them unless specifically searching for them. The writing is characterized by

- strong control of conventions; manipulation of conventions may occur for stylistic effect.
- strong, effective use of punctuation that guides the reader through the text.
- correct spelling, even of more difficult words.
- paragraph breaks that reinforce the organizational structure.
- correct grammar and usage that contribute to clarity and style.
- skill in using a wide range of conventions in a sufficiently long and complex piece.
- little or no need for editing.

5

The writing demonstrates strong control of standard writing conventions (e.g., punctuation, spelling, capitalization, paragraph breaks, grammar and usage) and uses them effectively to enhance communication. Errors are so few and so minor that they do not impede readability. The writing is characterized by

- strong control of conventions.
- effective use of punctuation that guides the reader through the text.
- correct spelling, even of more difficult words.
- paragraph breaks that reinforce the organizational structure.
- correct capitalization; errors, if any, are minor.
- correct grammar and usage that contribute to clarity and style.
- skill in using a wide range of conventions in a sufficiently long and complex piece.
- little need for editing.

4

The writing demonstrates control of standard writing conventions (e.g., punctuation, spelling, capitalization, paragraph breaks, grammar and usage). Minor errors, while perhaps noticeable, do not impede readability. The writing is characterized by

- control over conventions used, although a wide range is not demonstrated.
- correct end-of-sentence punctuation; internal punctuation may sometimes be incorrect.
- spelling that is usually correct, especially on common words.
- basically sound paragraph breaks that reinforce the organizational structure.
- correct capitalization; errors, if any, are minor.
- occasional lapses in correct grammar and usage; problems are not severe enough to distort meaning or confuse the reader.
- moderate need for editing.

3

The writing demonstrates limited control of standard writing conventions (e.g., punctuation, spelling, capitalization, paragraph breaks, grammar and usage). Errors begin to impede readability. The writing is characterized by

- some control over basic conventions; the text may be too simple to reveal mastery.
- end-of-sentence punctuation that is usually correct; however, internal punctuation contains frequent errors.
- spelling errors that distract the reader; misspelling of common words occurs.
- paragraphs that sometimes run together or begin at ineffective places.
- capitalization errors.
- errors in grammar and usage that do not block meaning but do distract the reader.
- significant need for editing.

2

The writing demonstrates little control of standard writing conventions. Frequent, significant errors impede readability. The writing is characterized by

- little control over basic conventions.
- many end-of-sentence punctuation errors; internal punctuation contains frequent errors.
- spelling errors that frequently distract the reader; misspelling of common words often occurs.
- paragraphs that often run together or begin in ineffective places.
- capitalization that is inconsistent or often incorrect.
- errors in grammar and usage that interfere with readability and meaning.
- substantial need for editing.

1

Numerous errors in usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation repeatedly distract the reader and make the text difficult to read. In fact, the severity and frequency of errors are so overwhelming that the reader finds it difficult to focus on the message and must reread for meaning. The writing is characterized by

- very limited skill in using conventions.
- basic punctuation (including end-of-sentence punctuation) that tends to be omitted, haphazard, or incorrect.
- frequent spelling errors that significantly impair readability.
- paragraph breaks that may be highly irregular or so frequent (every sentence) that they bear no relation to the organization of the text.
- capitalization that appears to be random.
- a need for extensive editing.

Citing Sources

Use only on classroom assignments requiring research

6	5	4
The writing demonstrates exceptionally strong commitment to the quality and significance of research and the accuracy of the written document. Documentation is used to avoid plagiarism and to enable the reader to judge how believeable or important a piece of information is by checking the source. The writer has • acknowledged borrowed material by introducing the quotation or paraphrase with the name of the authority. • punctuated all quoted materials; errors, if any, are minor. • paraphrased material by rewriting it using writer's style and language. • provided specific in-text documentation for each borrowed item. • provided a bibliography page listing every source cited in the paper; omitted sources that were consulted but not used.	**The writing demonstrates a strong commitment to the quality and significance of research and the accuracy of the written document. Documentation is used to avoid plagiarism and to enable the reader to judge how believable or important a piece of information is by checking the source. Errors are so few and so minor that the reader can easily skim right over them unless specifically searching for them. The writer has** • acknowledged borrowed material by introducing the quotation or paraphrase with the name of the authority; key phrases are directly quoted so as to give full credit where credit is due. • punctuated all quoted materials; errors are minor. • paraphrased material by rewriting using writer's style and language. • provided specific in-text documentation for borrowed material. • provided a bibliography page listing every source cited in the paper; omitted sources that were consulted but not used.	**The writing demonstrates a commitment to the quality and significance of research and the accuracy of the written document. Documentation is used to avoid plagiarism and to enable the reader to judge how believable or important a piece of information is by checking the source. Minor errors, while perhaps noticeable, do not blatantly violate the rules of documentation. The writer has** • acknowledged borrowed material by sometimes introducing the quotation or paraphrase with the name of the authority. • punctuated all quoted materials; errors, while noticeable, do not impede understanding. • paraphrased material by rewriting using writer's style and language. • provided in-text documentation for most borrowed material. • provided a bibliography page listing every source cited in the paper; included sources that were consulted but not used.
3	**2**	**1**
The writing demonstrates a limited commitment to the quality and significance of research and the accuracy of the written document. Documentation is sometimes used to avoid plagiarism and to enable the reader to judge how believeable or important a piece of information is by checking the source. Errors begin to violate the rules of documentation. The writer has • enclosed quoted materials within quotation marks; however, incorrectly used commas, colons, semicolons, question marks or exclamation marks that are part of the quoted material. • included paraphrased material that is not properly documented. • paraphrased material by simply rearranging sentence patterns.	**The writing demonstrates little commitment to the quality and significance of research and the accuracy of the written document. Frequent errors in documentation result in instances of plagiarism and often do not enable the reader to check the source. The writer has** • enclosed quoted materials within quotation marks; however, incorrectly used commas, colons, semicolons, question marks or exclamation marks that are part of the quoted material. • attempted paraphrasing but included words that should be enclosed by quotation marks or rephrased into the writer's language and style. • altered the essential ideas of the source. • included citations that incorrectly identify reference sources.	**The writing demonstrates disregard for the conventions of research writing. Lack of proper documentation result in plagiarism and do not enable the reader to check the source. The writer has** • borrowed abundantly from an original source, even to the point of retaining the essential wording. • no citations that credit source material. • included words or ideas from a source without providing quotation marks. • no bibliography page listing sources that were used.

Appendix B

WRITE
MODE SCORING GUIDE: DESCRIPTIVE

Definition: Descriptive writing presents an object, feelings, a place, or a person in a way that creates a vivid impression in the reader's mind, enabling the reader to readily picture what the writer is talking about, to gain a rich, comprehensive and detailed sense of what is being described, and to feel that he or she is very much part of the writer's experience.

High: The paper creates a strong and vivid image or impression in the reader's mind through numerous, well-chosen details. The writer seems to notice what others might overlook.

- The writing sparkles with specific, elaborate, colorful details. It is easy to picture or feel what the writer is talking about.
- Details are carefully, selectively chosen to create a consistent and clear mood, image, or impression, and are so sharp and clear they seem to lock themselves within the reader's memory.
- As appropriate, the writer includes details that appeal to various senses: sight, taste, smell, touch, hearing.

Mid-range: The paper includes sufficient descriptive detail to enable the reader to understand the writer's feelings or to picture the object, person, or place in a general way. Yet the reader may still have a strong sense that something is missing--that important details have been overlooked. The overall picture or impression is clear only in a broad general sense.

- Some details lack specificity (e.g., "The house was big and nice"), so that the reader has a general, but not vivid, picture of what the writer is talking about.
- Some details seem random, included by chance, rather than selectively chosen to create a particular impression or image. The writer sometimes neglects to weed out what seems trivial and unnecessary, or else leaves the reader with unanswered questions or conflicting impressions.
- An abundance of modifiers (adjectives everywhere) may sometimes bog the reader down in descriptive overload.
- Opportunities to enrich the description by appealing to several senses may be overlooked.

Low: The paper does not include sufficient descriptive detail to enable the reader to get inside the writer's mind or to picture the object, person, or place with any clarity. the overall picture or impression is very sketchy, fuzzy, or incomplete.

- Details are overwhelmingly general (e.g., "He was a fun person"; "It was neat and stuff"). No clear images or impressions are created.
- Lack of specific detail leaves the reader with numerous unanswered questions; it is very hard to get a mental grip on what the writer is describing.
- The writer does not seem to appeal directly to the reader's senses. Instead, it is left to the reader's imagination (or memory based on a similar experience) to conjure up the details that would flesh out the general impression or picture.

WRITE
MODE SCORING GUIDE: NARRATIVE

Definition: Narrative writing recounts a personal experience based on something which really happened or might really have happened. All details work together in an integrated way to create a complete story with a beginning (opening or lead), middle (build-up or turning point), and end (resolution).

High: The paper has a clear, complete, and strong storyline (e.g., presentation and resolution of a problem) that is easy to recognize, follow, and paraphrase.

- The writing seems complete. The writer sets the story up and finishes it. The result is a piece of writing that stands alone as a whole story.
- The writer sets the story up with a real lead, builds to the heart of the story with satisfying momentum, then closes with a real ending that provides a sense of resolution.
- The narrative structure may not be totally chronological, but it fits the narrative mode well. There is a clear, easy-to-follow sequence of events with a definite sense of movement, i.e., something happens.
- All details and events within the story work together to produce a unified, coherent piece of writing. The balance of detail is just right (e.g., not too skimpy--no information overload).
- The story has a controlling idea, central impression, sense of change, or something learned or gained by the writer. There is a reason for the telling.

Mid-range: The paper has an identifiable--not particularly strong--storyline. It may read more like a casual recollection of more-or-less related events than a well-crafted story.

- Most of the elements needed to form a complete story are present, but the writer has not yet orchestrated things in a way that creates a stand-alone piece.
- One or more of the following is likely to be true: The writer takes a little long getting in or provides no real lead at all, fails to recognize or accentuate the high point, or provides no real ending to the story.
- The sequence of events may sometimes be interrupted or unclear; it takes some smoothing out or filling in to paraphrase this story.
- The story as a whole may be either encumbered with excess baggage, or else a little lean on critical detail.
- Though a story seems buried within the text, it may be hard to infer the significance of the events or the writer's reason for telling the tale.

Low: The paper lacks a main storyline. It may be bits and pieces of several stories, an "all about" paper that tells no story, or an unelaborated list of events that the writer has not yet pulled together to create a meaningful story.

- Not all elements needed to create a complete, unified story are present; the writer could not assemble a story from what is now at hand.
- The writer does not seem to set up a situation, build to any main or high point, or provide an ending or sense of resolution; in short, there is no story.
- Details either do not go together in any unified way, or else they lack movement: i.e., nothing happens or changes.
- The organizational structure is not chronological and does not seem suited to the narrative mode. There is no clear sequence of events.
- An attempt to paraphrase what the writer has said does not produce a story.

WRITE
MODE SCORING GUIDE: IMAGINATIVE

Definition: In imaginative writing, the writer presents a story or other information in an inventive and highly individual manner. The purpose is to entertain the reader--and sometimes the writer, as well. The writer may create a scene, situation, or character, or use his/her creativity to present ideas in a fresh and novel way. Imaginative writing may contain elements of the whimsical or fantastic--but that's not a precondition. It can also be grounded in reality--but a reality that's created through the writer's own special vision and perspective.

High: The writing is individual, fresh, and vital. It takes an unusual, unpredictable (sometimes off-beat) approach to the topic, surprising and delighting the reader with unanticipated ideas or a new way of looking at things.

- Ideas tend consistently toward the original, the inventive, the unexpected (NOT necessarily bizarre, surreal or outlandish, however).
- The writer's perspective or point of view is highly individual--and often insightful. He/she defines or develops the topic in a refreshingly personal way, making connections no one else has made.
- The writer leads the reader into new territory, where details, twists, and turns cannot readily be anticipated. The reader has the sense of being pulled inside the writer's vision, "suspending disbelief" for a time.
- The writing consistently goes beyond the obvious, enlivening the topic, and challenging the reader to think.
- While ideas often seem spontaneous, they reflect a complexity that suggests the reader has thought the topic through, considered implications, and sought a way of exploring the topic that is his/hers alone.

Mid-range: Every now and then, the writing shows sparks of the unexpected or inventive (e.g., an image or plot twist that works remarkably well), but it also lapses into predictability (clichéd plots, stereotyped characters), echoing the writing of others.

- Moments of the original or unusual dot the writing; but they are interspersed with more ordinary passages in which the writer's imagination seems "at rest."
- The writer's perspective or point of view seems to be still evolving; it reflects some good powers of observation, but is not yet striking in its individuality or insight..
- The reader may feel entertained or intrigued by some passages, yet the writer covers enough old ground that it is hard to let go of one's own reality and "buy into" the text.
- Ideas are clear enough, but they are just beginning to show a hint of the complexity, depth, or vitality that comes when a writer stretches the bounds of his/her imagination.

Low: The writer seems detached and willing to settle for what is routine, ordinary, or mundane; there is no real mental stretch for writer or reader, no real sense of joy or adventure in the writing.

- The reader is hard-pressed to cite moments that sparkle with originality--moments that belong to this writer alone.
- The writer does not seem captivated by the topic, and/or has not yet thought of a way to enliven or personalize the topic.
- The writer does not put enough of him- or herself in the writing to reveal anything of his/her own perspective or vision of the world.
- As yet the writing lacks the complexity or depth to challenge a reader's thinking or lift the topic out of the realm of the obvious and predictable.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

WRITE
MODE SCORING GUIDE: EXPOSITORY

Definition: Expository writing gives information, explains something, clarifies, or defines. The writing teaches, reveals, informs, or amplifies the reader's understanding through a carefully crafted mix of key points and critical support.

High: The paper consistently presents information in a way that expands the reader's knowledge or enhances the reader's understanding. The result is clear, comprehensible, and complete.

- Ideas are unambiguous and fully explained.
- The paper makes a point that the reader can readily grasp.
- Facts, examples, or explanations provide strong support.
- The reader has a sense of learning something or understanding an issue/topic better.
- The writer seems to be working from a strong base of information, and can select what will help the reader most.
- The writer shows a concern for the reader, and consistently presents information in a way that contributes to the reader's understanding.

Mid-range: The paper presents some important information, but the reader feels about halfway home in terms of understanding the point the writer is trying to make. The result is a mix of helpful information, together with some fuzzy or incomplete points.

- Ideas are reasonably clear, but the reader needs to make some inferences.
- The writer makes a general point, or points, but hasn't narrowed or fine-tuned the topic quite enough yet.
- Facts, examples, or explanations provide marginally adequate (but not strong) support.
- Some parts of the paper seem repetitive or predictable.
- The writer seems to have <u>just</u> enough information to write about this topic, but not enough to anticipate and address all the reader's questions.
- The writer seems aware of the reader, but often tends to explain what's already obvious, or to make assumptions about the reader's knowledge that aren't warranted.
- The writer attempts to explain or inform, but the power of the paper to enhance the reader's understanding is somewhat limited.

Low: The paper is very limited in its capacity to inform or enlighten the reader. The writing is very unclear, incomplete, or both.

- Ideas are extremely limited or hard to understand, even if the reader tries to draw inferences based on what is there.
- The paper cannot seem to get beyond lists or generalizations; it is more puzzling or confusing than enlightening.
- The writer does not seem to have enough information to write about this topic. Support is very weak or nonexistent.
- The reader has a difficult time gleaning any knowledge, insight, or understanding from the text.

WRITE
MODE SCORING GUIDE: PERSUASIVE

Definition: Persuasive writing attempts to convince the reader that a point of view is valid, or to persuade the reader to take specific action. It is based on a topic that is limited in scope (and therefore manageable), and that is debatable--a topic about which there could be more than one point of view. Persuasive differs from expository writing in that it does more than explain or enlighten; it also takes a stand, and endeavors to persuade the reader to take that same stand.

High: The central issue is clearly stated, and elaborated as necessary to indicate in-depth understanding on the part of the writer. The writer's position is very clear, and the primary argument or proposed plan is presented in an effective and compelling way.

- The writer takes a definite stand and sticks with it; he/she may show sensitivity to other viewpoints, but does not waffle or shift sides part way through the argument.
- The writer indicates a thorough understanding of the issues involved and narrows or focuses the topic in a way that helps the reader zero in on key issues, too.
- Support is extensive and convincing. The writer generally offers more than a single reason for his/her position, and does not rely strictly on opinion or emotional pleas.
- If it is important to consider (and refute) possible counter arguments, the writer does so, but in a way that makes the presentation enlightening, not confusing.
- There is enough information to guide the reader in making a sound decision on this issue.
- The reader feels convinced/persuaded OR (at least) develops a real appreciation and respect for the writer's position.

Mid-range: The central issue is stated clearly, but without sufficient elaboration to indicate any in-depth understanding. Although it is fairly clear which side the writer is on, the main arguments may not be well-developed or presented in a compelling way.

- The more obvious, well-worn arguments are usually in place (e.g., there may be enough there to persuade those who already agree); but the writer rarely digs for the solid, sound evidence that could really enable a skeptical reader to see things in a new light.
- Support is fairly credible, but tends to be general, limited, or predictable.
- Some arguments may seem tentative or a bit lame.
- The writer may rely too much on just one argument, or may rely almost as much on opinion and emotion as on strong evidence or the wisdom of experience.
- The writer has given enough thought to the topic to take a position and defend it with some feeling, but has not yet assembled enough critical evidence, reasons, or logical arguments to guide others in making a good decision on this issue.

Low: It may be hard to infer the central issue without knowing the prompt or question asked. The writer either does not take a clear stand (e.g., just makes general, noncommittal comments), or else simply expresses an unsupported, unelaborated opinion.

- The writer may begin with one position, then totally and arbitrarily change course, as if just now realizing his/her true feelings.
- The writer's understanding of key issues seems as yet limited; there is little or no information that would really help a reader think through the question(s) at hand.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

WRITE
MODE SCORING GUIDE: PERSUASIVE

Low: cont'd

- The writer who takes a stand tends to rely far more on emotional pleas (e.g., "Everyone hates school uniforms...") than on well-thought-out reasons that would convince the reader.
- Arguments are very weak, hard to follow, or limited strictly to the writer's opinion (e.g., "Year-round school is a dumb idea").
- The reader feels either unconvinced or unsure what position the writer wishes him/her to take.

Appendix C

Sample Prompts, 1993-1997

Grade 8

Descriptive:

Most people have their own "territory" or place where they feel most comfortable or most alive. DESCRIBE your "territory" so that a reader could picture what it is like and how you feel there.

Some people are fans of a particular artist or writer, entertainer, political or social leader, athlete, etc. Other people are fanatic about collecting things, about their hobbies, or about some specific interest. DESCRIBE a person you know who is the "ultimate fan" or "fanatic."

Imaginative:

Authors use many sources for ideas. Use one of the following ideas and MAKE UP A STORY. Choice 1: "Coals and Embers" Choice 2: "Injustice"

MAKE UP A STORY that contains the line, "If only I had read that letter a day sooner."

Pretend that you found something mysterious. WRITE AN IMAGINATIVE STORY about what you saw and what happened.

Narrative:

You can probably remember at least one time when you did something for someone else that made you feel proud of yourself. Think about what you did and how you felt about it. TELL WHAT HAPPENED.

Most people, at some time in their lives, have had to wait for something they wanted very much. It might have been a certain event they looked forward to or a certain object or thing they wanted. Think of a time in your life when you had to wait for something and TELL WHAT HAPPENED.

TELL A TRUE STORY about an unforgettable moment which occurred when you were participating in or observing a physical activity (for example: recess, games, dance, individual or team sports, skateboarding, bicycling, swimming or any other physical activity).

Expository:

Think of something you do well–anything at all. EXPLAIN how to do this so clearly and so completely that your reader will understand just what it takes to be good at this activity.

Twenty years from now young people will want to know what life was like in the 90's. EXPLAIN what you think is interesting or important for them to know and why.

Suppose that your home was destroyed by a natural disaster. You and your family escaped safely. Assume that you could safely retrieve only one non-living thing from the disaster. WRITE A PAPER EXPLAINING what you would take and why.

Persuasive:

Many people your age want more freedom in their lives. Think of a specific privilege you would like that you do not now have. Write a paper trying to CONVINCE your parents or other adults in your life to grant you this privilege. Respond to concerns they are likely to have.

Write a paper in which you choose and explain the living environment (city, town, or country) you think best for living as a family, especially as children reach their teenage years. CONVINCE the reader to agree with you.

A famous song says, "Chicago is my kind of town." Is your hometown "your kind of town" or not? WRITE A PAPER TO PERSUADE a reader to agree with your feelings about your town.

Grades 10 and 11

Descriptive:

Everyone has had some type of work experience, whether it was at home (building or repairing something, baby-sitting, yard or garden work, etc.) or at a workplace for pay. DESCRIBE a work experience you have had so that a reader can visualize your work environment and understand how it felt to be there.

Some people are fans of a particular artist, writer, entertainer, political or social leader, athlete, etc. Other people are fanatic about collecting things, about their hobbies, or about some specific interest. DESCRIBE a person you know who is the "ultimate fan" or "fanatic."

Imaginative:

MAKE UP A STORY with one of the following titles: (a) "Lines" or (b) "No Closed Doors"

Imagine a desert that extends for thousands of miles. MAKE UP A STORY about something that happens in this setting.

Imagine that you can travel in time to any place or any time that you wish. Pick one time and place and WRITE AN IMAGINATIVE STORY about what happens.

Narrative:

Think of an event you would still want to remember when you are much older. TELL THE STORY of what happened in such a way that if you re-read it years from now, it would all come flooding back to you as if it had just happened yesterday.

Think about a time in your life that involved ONE of the following: challenge, discovery, surprise, OR survival. TELL THE STORY of what happened.

TELL A TRUE STORY about a time when you would have liked to do or say something over again so that things turned out differently.

Expository:

In all our possessions, there are usually one or two very precious objects. Choose one that you really love. Describe how it looks, why it's special, and how or why you got it. Use as much detail as you can to EXPLAIN why this object is important to you.

Students in high school choose a variety of ways in which to stay physically fit. Many choose to participate in organized sports, while others choose individual out-of-school sports or other ways to exercise. EXPLAIN why an activity you choose is important to you.

Assume that you could be in any part of the world. This place could be in or near your home or somewhere quite far away. EXPLAIN your chosen place and why you want to be there.

John Donne's saying "No man is an island" suggests that what one person does has an effect on others. WRITE A PAPER EXPLAINING how this idea applies to you and your experiences.

Persuasive:

People are always looking for ways to improve schools, and some of the best ideas come from students. Think of ONE change you could propose that would make your school better. Write a letter to the editor or an essay that would CONVINCE other people to feel the same way you do about this issue.

Many people think that classic literature is no longer relevant while others insist that educated people read the classics. Take a stand and WRITE A PAPER TO PERSUADE your reader that students either should or shouldn't have to read classic literature.

According to surveys, a majority of high school juniors and seniors in the U.S. work at part-time jobs during the school year. Take a position on whether or not you think working and going to school at the same time is a good idea. Your purpose in writing is to CONVINCE the reader to agree with your position.

A famous song says, "Chicago is my kind of town." Is your hometown "your kind of town" or not? WRITE A PAPER TO PERSUADE a reader to agree with your feelings about your town.

Appendix D

GUIDE TO REVISION
Grades 8 and 10

Use the checklist below to help you revise your rough draft before you copy it into your writing folder.

IDEAS AND CONTENT

- ☐ My paper has a clear purpose or makes a point.
- ☐ I choose clear details and examples to help the reader understand my message.
- ☐ I stick to the main idea. I leave out details that do not matter.
- ☐ I am writing about something I know.

ORGANIZATION

- ☐ My introduction would make a reader want to keep reading.
- ☐ I tell things in an order that makes sense.
- ☐ Details in my paper go together.
- ☐ My paper ends in a good spot. It doesn't stop suddenly or drag on too long.

VOICE

- ☐ My writing shows what I really think and feel.
- ☐ I like what I have written.
- ☐ My writing sounds like me, and not like someone else.
- ☐ I have thought about my reader. I have tried to make my writing clear to the reader.

WORD CHOICE

- ☐ The words I choose will make my meaning clear.
- ☐ My words paint a picture in the reader's mind.
- ☐ I have tried to find my own way to say things.
- ☐ Sometimes I have tried to say something in a new or different way.

SENTENCE FLUENCY

- ☐ My sentences make sense. They are clear.
- ☐ I vary the length of my sentences.
- ☐ Sentences begin in different ways. (They do NOT all begin with the same words.)
- ☐ My paper would be easy to read out loud.

CONVENTIONS

- ☐ My paragraphs begin in the right spots.
- ☐ My capitalization and punctuation are correct.
- ☐ I have used correct grammar which contributes to the clarity of my paper.
- ☐ I have proofread my paper.

Student Writer's Report

1997 Oregon Statewide Assessment Program

NAME: **ESSAY ID:**
TEACHER: **PERIOD:**
SCHOOL: **GRADE:**
DISTRICT: **TEST DATE:**
CDS CODE:

Thank you very much for sharing a sample of your writing with us. Two readers have evaluated your writing and their scores are included in this report. Your paper was scored in six categories:

IDEAS: How clear, complete and well-developed were your ideas?

ORGANIZATION: How effective was your introduction? Did you present information in an order that makes sense? Did you end your paper well?

VOICE: Did you put something of yourself into the paper? Was the writing lively? Did you write what you really thought and felt?

WORD CHOICE: Did you choose words that helped make your message both interesting and easy to understand?

SENTENCE FLUENCY: Were sentences smooth and easy to read?

CONVENTIONS: Did you proofread carefully and correct errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and grammar? Did your paragraphs begin at the right spots?

HERE IS WHAT THE SPECIAL CODES MEAN:

Special codes appear in the last column of scores only if they apply to your paper.

BL: Blank
TS: Too short
TL: Too long - your paper significantly exceeded the space allowed.
NE: Not written in English
IL: Illegible
PV: Profane or violent
MS: Miscellaneous - Your paper was not scored for a reason other than those listed at left.
OTS: Off Topic Scorable - Your paper was scored, but it was not on a topic you were given.

Your Scores

	Ideas & Content	Organi-zation	Voice	Word Choice	Sentence Fluency	Conven-tions	Special Code
Reader 1							
Reader 2							

If the scores in any traits differ, that means the two readers did not totally agree on their judgment of your performance in that trait. In this case, your score is a combination of the two readers' scores. For example, 4/5 shows that your score is somewhere between a 4 and 5.

WHAT THE SCORES MEAN, BASED ON OREGON'S SCORING GUIDE:

Score of 6: **Exemplary.** The reader felt your writing showed complete mastery in this trait and that, as a writer, you were in exceptional control of your writing.

Score of 5: **Strong.** The reader felt your writing showed many strengths in this trait and that, as a writer, you were perfecting control of your writing.

Score of 4: **Proficient.** The reader felt your writing showed strengths in this trait and that, as a writer, you were in control of your writing.

Score of 3: **Developing.** The reader felt your writing showed both strengths and weaknesses and that, as a writer, you were developing some control of your writing.

Score of 2: **Emerging.** The reader felt your writing showed partial control, but may need more detail or polishing.

Score of 1: **Beginning.** The reader felt your writing was in a "beginning" stage, where you had difficulty communicating your thoughts.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Appendix F

Requirements for Collection of Work Samples

State performance assessments and classroom assignments are scored using the official state scoring guide. The areas of the guide used for the standards include (1) Ideas and Content; (2) Organization; (3) Sentence Fluency; (4) Writing Conventions; and for grades 8 and 10, (5) Citing Sources.

Grade 3

Evidence	Meets	Exceeds
Two assignments showing at least two types of writing (i.e. narrative, expository, persuasive or imaginative).	Score of 3 in ideas and content, organization, writing conventions.	Score of 4 in ideas and content, organization, writing conventions.

Grade 5

Evidence	Meets	Exceeds
Three assignments showing three types of writing (i.e. narrative, expository, persuasive or imaginative). One assignment must be a report based on research.	Score of 4 in all areas	Score of 5 in all areas

Grade 8

Evidence	Meets	Exceeds
Four assignments. The assignments must demonstrate expository and persuasive writing. They also must demonstrate narrative or imaginative writing. Either an expository or a persuasive assignment must include citations.	Score of 4 in all areas	Score of 5 in all areas

Grade 10

Evidence	Meets	Exceeds
Five assignments including a business, technical or vocational paper. The assignments must demonstrate expository and persuasive writing. They also must demonstrate narrative or imaginative writing. Either an expository or a persuasive assignment must include citations.	Score of 4 in all areas	Score of 5 in all areas

Appendix G

Conversion Tables from Five to Six-Point Scoring Scale

In 1995, the Department of Education revised its scoring guide for writing assessment to describe six levels of performance, rather than the previous five levels. This change was made to reflect the levels of achievement for the Certificate of Initial Mastery. The two scales result in a lack of comparability of new scores with previous writing assessments when using "raw" scores. A conversion (equating) formula is necessary to make the two scales comparable. A study was conducted to score the same set of papers under both scoring systems and estimate the parameters for the linear equating formula that appears below.

The steps to convert 1991, 1992, 1993 and 1994 writing assessment means to the 6-point scale are as follows:

Calculate a mean score on the 6-point scale by multiplying the mean on the 5-point scale by parameter A, and adding parameter B to this product. Parameters A and B, which differ by grade and writing trait, are given in the following tables:

Grade 3 Conversion Parameters

	Ideas	Organization	Voice	Word Choice	Sentence Fluency	Conventions
Parameter A	.95	.96	.93	1.20	.99	.83
Parameter B	.50	.21	.46	-0.51	.05	.52

Grade 5 Conversion Parameters

	Ideas	Organization	Voice	Word Choice	Sentence Fluency	Conventions
Parameter A	.96	.88	.94	1.21	.95	.91
Parameter B	.56	1.12	.92	-0.12	.61	1.00

Grade 8 Conversion Parameters

	Ideas	Organization	Voice	Word Choice	Sentence Fluency	Conventions
Parameter A	1.12	1.00	.85	1.06	.89	1.02
Parameter B	.01	.12	.97	.38	.63	.06

Grade 11 Conversion Parameters

	Ideas	Organization	Voice	Word Choice	Sentence Fluency	Conventions
Parameter A	.84	.78	.79	.93	.88	.84
Parameter B	.66	1.06	1.08	.57	.57	.83

Appendix H

Inter-rater reliability: 1997

	Trait	Exact Agreement	Adjacent Agreement	Non-Agreement	Mean
Grade 3	Ideas/Content	51%	44%	4%	3.7
	Organization	51%	45%	4%	3.6
	Voice	52%	44%	4%	3.9
	Word Choice	57%	41%	2%	3.8
	Sentence Fluency	53%	44%	3%	3.7
	Conventions	55%	42%	2%	3.6
Grade 8	Ideas/Content	51%	45%	4%	3.9
	Organization	51%	45%	4%	3.9
	Voice	50%	46%	4%	4.1
	Word Choice	55%	42%	3%	4.0
	Sentence Fluency	52%	44%	4%	3.9
	Conventions	53%	44%	3%	3.7
Grade 10	Ideas/Content	51%	44%	5%	4.0
	Organization	51%	44%	5%	3.9
	Voice	51%	44%	5%	4.2
	Word Choice	57%	40%	3%	4.0
	Sentence Fluency	53%	43%	4%	4.0
	Conventions	53%	43%	4%	3.8

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Appendix I

Writing Content Panel Members

1992-1993

Patty Beauchamp	Jefferson Elementary School, Corvallis
Linda Beith	David Douglas School District, Portland
Brian Borton	Astor Elementary School, Astoria
Carol Brown	Waverly Elementary School, Albany
Dennis Cass	La Grande High School, La Grande
Consuelo Curtis	Bear Creek Elementary School, Bend
Judy Drais	Talent Junior High School, Talent
Corlee Fredrick	Rainier Elementary School, Rainier
Chris Gilde	Seaside High School, Seaside
Bonnie Hill	Alsea High School, Alsea
Steve Hudson	Portland Community College, Portland
Mike Hyden	Culver Middle School, Culver
Dick Jascoski	McNary High School, Salem
Ronalie Kincaid	Springfield High School, Springfield
Nancy May	Siuslaw High School, Florence
Amy Meabe	Waluga Junior High School, Lake Oswego
Judy Severen	Athena Elementary School, Athena
Lana Stanley	Hermiston High School, Hermiston
Carolyn Watson	Portsmouth Middle School, Portland
Patti Wixon	Walker Elementary, Ashland

1993-1994

Patty Beauchamp	Jefferson Elementary, Corvallis
Linda Beith	David Douglas School District, Portland
Brian Borton	Astor Elementary School, Astoria
Carol Brown	Waverly Elementary School, Albany
Dennis Cass	La Grande High School, La Grande
Judy Drais	Talent Junior High, Talent
Corlee Fredrick	Rainier Elementary School, Rainier
Bonnie Hill	Alsea High School, Alsea
Steve Hudson	Portland Community College, Portland
Mike Hyden	Culver Middle School, Culver
Dick Jascoski	McNary High School, Salem
Ronalie Kincaid	Springfield High School, Springfield
Nancy May	Siuslaw High School, Florence
Amy Meabe	Waluga Junior High School, Lake Oswego
Judy Severen	Athena Elementary School, Athena
Lana Stanley	Hermiston High School, Hermiston
Carolyn Watson	Portsmouth Middle School, Portland

1994-1995

Patty Beauchamp	Jefferson Elementary, Corvallis
Linda Beith	David Douglas School District, Portland
Brian Borton	Astor Elementary School, Astoria
Carol Brown	Waverly Elementary School, Albany
Judy Drais	Talent Junior High, Talent
Chris Gilde	Seaside High School, Seaside

Pat Haley	Grants Pass School District, Grants Pass
Richard Havens	Gladstone High School, Gladstone
Bonnie Hill	Alsea High School, Alsea
Steve Hudson	Portland Community College, Portland
Dick Jascoski	McNary High School, Salem
Ronalie Kincaid	Springfield High School, Springfield
Amy Meabe	Waluga Junior High School, Lake Oswego
Judy Severen	Athena-Weston School District, Athena
Lana Stanley	Hermiston High School, Hermiston
Lorraine Strand	Lebanon Union High School, Lebanon

1995-1996

Patty Beauchamp	Jefferson Elementary School, Corvallis
Linda Beith	David Douglas School District, Portland
Brian Borton	Astor Elementary School , Astoria
Maria Cervantes	Nellie Muir Elementary School, Woodburn
Kathy Cowan	Blanco Middle School, Port Orford
D. Eloise Dielman	Eastern Oregon State College, La Grande
Judy Drais	Talent Middle School, Talent
Daphne Faulk	Whitman Elementary School, Portland
Sammy Fratto	Whiteaker Middle School, Salem
Bonnie Hill	Alsea High School, Alsea
Steve Hudson	Portland Community College, Portland
Teri Houghton	Hidden Valley High School, Grants Pass
Ronalie Kincaid	Springfield High School, Springfield
Cynthia MacLeod	Sabin Elementary School, Portland
Bobby Puckett	Ontario High School, Ontario
LeAnne Raze	Harrisburg Elementary School, Harrisburg
Dian Smith	Riddle High School, Riddle

1996-1997

Patty Beauchamp	Jefferson Elementary, Corvallis
Linda Beith	David Douglas School District, Portland
Brian Borton	Astor Elementary School, Astoria
Kathy Cowan	Blanco Junior High School, Port Orford
Daphne Faulk	Whitman Elementary School, Portland
Sharon Faulkner	Lakeview High School, Lakeview
Sammy Fratto	Whiteaker Middle School, Salem
Bonnie Hill	Alsea High School, Alsea
Jocelyn Hoffman	Terra Linda Elementary, Beaverton
Stephen Hudson	Portland Community College, Portland
Dick Jaskoski	McNary High School, Salem
Ronalie Kincaid	Springfield High School, Springfield
Bobby Puckett	Ontario High School, Ontario
LeAnne Raze	Harrisburg Elementary, Harrisburg
William Shotton	Lava Ridge Elementary, Bend
Dian Smith	Riddle High School, Riddle
Marlene Soderquist	Kinnaman Elementary, Beaverton
Sue Walsh	Schirle Elementary, Salem
Susan Zottola	Riverside Elementary, Grants Pass

Additional assistance and consultation provided by Sue Blanchard, Independent Consultant; Don Blanchard, Independent Consultant; and Evelyn Brzezinski, Interwest Applied Research

Appendix J

Bibliography: Writing Assessment and Instruction

Atwell, Nancie. *In the Middle*. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann, 1987.

If you were stuck on a desert island (with 30 students), this is the book you'd want to have...for practical strategies, for philosophy of pedagogy, for personal inspiration. This book may have influenced writing instruction more than any other book on teaching writing, judging by the number of times it's cited in journals and other texts. Teachers of any grade level will benefit from reading this seminal work.

Calkins, Lucy McCormick. *The Art of Teaching Writing*. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann, 1986.

If you get just one new reference book this year, you might want to make it this one. It's full of practical, down-to-earth advice well-grounded in this excellent teacher's personal experience. Primarily aimed at elementary teachers, but with a nod to middle school, and much wisdom applicable at all levels, right through adult. A book to cherish.

Graves, Donald H. *Writing: Teachers and Children At Work*. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann, 1983.

The title tells it all. Graves takes us right into the classroom to witness the victories and struggles of teachers and children up close. A master teacher with an easy-on-the-ear style, Graves helps us make the connection between theory and practical experience, as only he can. One of the best.

Hewitt, Geof. *A Portfolio Primer*. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann, 1995.

More than a book about portfolios, this is part case study, part writing instruction text, part biography, part portfolio, part testimonial, and wholly entertaining. When a poet becomes a state bureaucrat (which is Hewitt's history), an interesting perspective results. The detailed table of contents and index make it easy to locate specifics, but you'll find yourself caught up in the narrative, student writings and the many small pieces within the chapters. Read this book and gain from the pioneering work done with portfolios (and writing in general) in Vermont.

King, Laurie and Dennis Stovall. *Classroom Publishing*. Hillsboro, Oregon: Blue Heron Publishing Company, 1992.

A hundred teachers answering the question "How do I see my students through the final step of writing...publishing?" His book is like a one-to-one conversation with dozens of clever but realistic teachers, each having actually tried out the methods that are described. The book's attractive layout makes it easy to read with ample white space for making notes and responding. The teacher who's a novice when it comes to publishing will find

inspiration and helpful techniques, and those who have published student work will learn how to polish, refine and diversify their products. This book fills a major void in most teachers' background and training, and it's enjoyable and easy to read as well. With its chapters on how to fund publications, legal issues, and resources for publishing, as well as the multitude of case studies cited, you will definitely find many answers to your questions about publishing. It's like buying a box of courage in the bookstore!

Murray, Donald M. *A Writer Teaches Writing.* (Second edition: A complete revision.) Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1985.

Can a reference book on writing read like a novel? If it's written by Donald M. Murray, it can come close. For learning what the writing process is all about, this book is tough to beat. Murray discusses his own writing with a graceful humor and appealing insight. This is a remarkably instructive book so entertaining you can take it along on vacation.

Muschla, Gary Robert. *The Writing Teacher's Book of Lists.* Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1991.

Useful and user-friendly, this book could even serve as a reference book for students to use on their own. Need general guidelines on playwriting for the gifted student who wants to work independently? Direct her to page 233. Need a mini-lesson on figures of speech? See page 152. This book supports integrated instruction with its word lists related to health, sports, advertising and many others. Also, those using a Writer's Workshop format will be interested in the checklists for various stages in the writing process: prewriting, target audiences, organization, revision, proofreading. Some teachers may find certain activities too brief or simplistic; for example, the "Checklist for Revision" (p. 193) is 20 items long, and half of the items deal with writing conventions, which can be handled more effectively in a separate "editing" step, after the writer has revised for focus, organization, word choice and clarity. However, the lists are helpful in themselves, and the book is easy to use.

Muschla, Gary Robert. *Writing Workshop Survival Kit.* West Nyack, N.Y.: The Center for Applied Research in Education, 1993.

Tidbits and tools are available in this book which is organized according to steps in the writing process, types of writing, and writing mechanics. Like *The Writing Teacher's Book of Lists*, many components are too brief and will require you to supplement with additional examples. However, the materials are ready for reproduction as worksheets or transparencies, and students could refer to the book independently when they need something specific such as a sample letter or guidelines on writing a title for a story. Teachers of writing workshop in grades 4-10 will find this most useful, and those making a transition to writing workshop will use this over and over to plan their lessons.

Perl, Sondra and Nancy Wilson. *Through Teachers' Eyes: Portraits of Writing Teachers At Work*. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann, 1986.

Fascinating. You'll see yourself again and again in the successes and failures of real flesh and blood teachers in the classroom who are trying to learn right along with their students. Excellent examples of students' writing at grades 1, 4, 8, and 11. Don't miss this book.

Newkirk, Thomas, ed. *To Compose: Teaching Writing in High School and College*. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann, 1990.

Each essay in this book is interesting, focusing on one writer/teacher's lesson about an aspect of the writing process (Toby Fulwiler on journals, William Stafford on getting started, Tom Romano on grammar, etc.). Secondary teachers will find this book especially interesting, and will find it an entertaining and concise encapsulation of some of the most provocative thoughts of the greatest writing teachers.

Rief, Linda. *Seeking Diversity: Language Arts with Adolescents*. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann, 1992.

An excellent follow-up to Atwell's *In the Middle*, Rief provides usable, concrete examples of methods and activities that apply the philosophy of reading and writing workshop in the classroom. Pieces written by students add liveliness and authenticity, and the helpful appendices can be easily adapted for your classroom, saving you hours of planning time.

Routman, Regie. *Invitations: Changing as Teachers and Learners K-12*. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann, 1991. Also, *Transitions: From Literature to Literacy*. Portsmouth, New Hampshire, Heinemann, 1988.

Both books are treasure troves of resources for teachers, with practical information such as how to construct flip booklets and an actual complete unit on folk/fairy tales for grades 3-6. In addition, there is a wealth of theory steeped in practice, and thoughful analysis of every aspect of teaching literacy. Above all, teachers will appreciate the enormous quantity of student and teacher samples that illustrate virtually every point. When discussing anecdotal records in the chapter on evaluation, Routman includes a copy of a kindergarten teacher's anecdotal records which were handwritten on mailing labels so they could be pasted on to student records. The bibliographies and booklists for children are also a great help to the classroom teacher. Routman truly lives where theory meets practice!

Spandel, Vicki and Richard Stiggins. *Creating Writers: Linking Assessment and Writing Instruction*. New York: Addison Wesley/Longman, 1990.

You can learn to assess writing analytically—then teach the process to your students. Students, grade 4 on up, who learn assessment skills also learn new ways of thinking about writing and build skills not only in revising, but in writing first drafts. This book will show you how to integrate writing instruction and writing assessment in useful ways, and empower students as evaluators of their own work.

Tate, Gary and Edward Corbett. *The Writing Teacher's Sourcebook*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1988.

A more academic text than many of the others on this list, this book contains chapters by many of the greatest writing teachers (Donald Murray, Peter Elbow, Toby Fulwiler, Mina Shaughnessy, Janet Emig, Sondra Perl). Most of these essays were previously published in journals, and are aimed at high school or college teachers of compositon. However, they do provide a theoretical framework for all teachers of writing. The chapters are thematically organized (The Composing Process and Responding to Writing, for example), and are followed by lists of related readings.

Tierney, Robert J. *Portfolio Assessment in the Reading-Writing Classroom*. Norwood, Maine: Christopher-Gordon Publishers, Inc., 1991.

An easy format to absorb, with key points of each section enumerated in concise summaries. Quite comprehensive without being overly heavy or dry. The detailed and extensive annotated bibliography may be helpful in guiding you to their sources, and the helpful visuals and clear layout make it user-friendly. The section on portfolio conferences is disappointingly brief and general, however.

Williams, Robin. *The Mac is Not a Typewriter*. Berkeley, CA: Peachpit Press, 1990.

If you went to college (or high school) in the pre-PC era, you probably never knew that the rules of typing are different for computers than they are for typewriters. For example, after end punctuation, one space rather than two is preferable. It may take years for us to break our ingrained habits, but after reading this concise little book, we have no excuse not to try. This book is sort of a Strunk and White for the computer age, reviewing a few traditional rules, and providing many details that will make your writing look more professional. This book will also help your school secretary and anyone else who puts out printed matter on a computer. There's another edition for those who use other kinds of computers (titled *The PC is not a Typewriter*).

Yancey, Kathleen Blake, ed. *Portfolios in the Writing Classroom.* Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1992.

A good place to start learning about portfolios, with chapters aimed at age groups ranging up to college level. A department, a faculty, a team, a site council or any other group interested in portfolios might select particular chapters to launch their own discussion or planning of portfolios.

Zinsser, William. *On Writing Well.* (Third edition.) New York: Harper and Row, 1985.

Zinsser practices what he preaches; he writes well. He knows what he's talking about—and he knows how to put things so that you understand and remember. He's bright, witty, knowledgeable—and he breaks through to the heart of what good writing is about. Read bits and pieces of this book aloud to students; you'll entertain and enlighten everyone at the same time. A fine, fine book.

Too new to be reviewed but very likely to be wonderful...

Practical Ideas (for teaching writing as a process).

An edition of this was put out in 1987, containing approximately a hundred brief articles by California teachers, mostly graduates of the Bay Area and other Writing Projects. Each chapter begins with a piece discussing some theory—just enough to provide a context for the practical strategies that follow. The concise, specific strategies project the voices of all of the teachers they represent: sincere, intimate, down-to-earth. You'll never feel (professionally) lonely again! There is a 1996 edition specifically aimed at elementary and middle level; an edition for high school and college teachers will be available soon.
To order, call (916) 445-1260, and specify that you want #1221 for the elementary/ middle level edition or #1222 for the high school/college edition. The cost is $18.00 plus $4.95 for shipping and handling.